

Elementary English



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NATIONAL

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OF

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OF

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MAY,
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FOLK TALE COLLECTIONS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DICTIONARIES
LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN
READING AND LISTENING



From Tales of a Korean Grandmother

Elementary ENGLISH

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An Open Letter To NCTE And Subscribers To Elementary English

Dear Friends:

This is the third year which I have asked you to renew your membership or subscription during May or June. In the past you have responded in large numbers, and as a result, we have been able to give you uninterrupted service in the fall. We realize how irritating it can be to receive a magazine a month or more late, and with your help, we can avoid a difficulty in the fall of 1957. Most of our members and subscribers have their subscriptions expiring with the May issue. If all of these people wait until September 1 to renew, we have more work than we can conveniently handle at one time with our limited office space. Too, we send out a large mailing promoting the Council each year. That promotion is mailed on the Friday before Labor Day, and when the new applications start coming in, they come in large numbers. If we have most of our renewing members' applications processed by the first of August, we can give both the former and the new members much better service.

If you have received a renewal notice lately, or if one arrives in the near future, please send it back with your remittance immediately. You will be helping us to serve you better.

Cordially,

Lawrence E. Connolly
Business Manager

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

704 SOUTH SIXTH STREET CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

By Way of Introduction . . .

The author of our leading article this month is no newcomer to our pages. CONSTANCE CARR will be remembered especially for the popular series, "Substitutes for the Comic Books," which was reprinted as a Council pamphlet. For the past five years she has been Editor of the Association for Childhood Educational International.

* * *

Elementary school dictionaries are appearing in increasing number and increasingly attractive format. Professor MURRAY offers guidance to teachers or supervisors who are called upon to make choices among them.

* * *

Professor LAWRENCE H. MADDOCK, who describes criteria for children's literature in this issue, has taught in elementary school, high school, and college. He was formerly Instructor in English at the University of Florida.

* * *

Practical suggestions for the classroom teacher are contained in the brief articles by SHIRLEY BRYAN WRIGHT, MARGARET KIRBY, MARY S. ROEDER, NEAL R. EDMUND, and FLORENCE LACHMAN.

* * *

The relationship between reading and listening continues to attract much interest among investigators and teachers. In discussing the improvement of reading through listening DR. EDNA LUE FURNESS exhibits the thoroughness which *Ele-*

mentary English readers have come to expect from her articles.

* * *

Professor STANLEY STAHL has just accepted the position of Director of the Campus School of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. He holds the doctor's degree from the University of Maryland.

* * *

How reliable are the reading readiness tests? ROBERT KARLIN presents an original study which casts some doubt upon their value as predictors of success in reading. He too has taught at all levels from elementary school through college.

* * *

DR. DELWYN G. SCHUBERT has done extensive institute and consultant work in reading throughout California and has lectured before many parent and other lay groups. He is a board member of the California Reading Association.

* * *

With this issue we begin our series of profiles of pioneers in reading. It was fitting that the series should begin with William Scott Gray, who is sometimes called the dean of reading specialists in America. The article will be followed by sketches of such men as Arthur I. Gates, Paul Witty, and other famous leaders in the field. The tribute to Dr. Gray is by Professor WALTER J. MOORE of the University of Illinois, one of Dr. Gray's proteges and assistants in recent years.

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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No. 5

CONSTANCE CARR

Folk Tale Collections

Among the new books appearing each year are collections of folk tales from many parts of the world. This is an exciting addition to our literature for children, since the world is growing smaller (time-wise) and the need to know more about peoples of all kinds is becoming more imperative.

The following discussion is based upon a study of folk tale collections somewhat less familiar than the English, French, German, Scandinavian, American Indian, and American folk tales. The bibliography lists collections which touch every continent, many different countries, or segments of a country.

Why Use Folk Tales with Children?

Inherent in establishing criteria for evaluating these folktales is understanding why we would use folk tales with children:

1. The folk tales meet many of the needs children have for reading. They are based on human desires and human emo-

tions which continue strong and unchanging through the ages. They are built around the elements of need for security, for love, for achievement. These needs are timeless in their appeal.

2. The folk tales are for all ages— young and old alike. They came out of the

centuries—told from one group to another, not just to children. They make an excellent source of material for sharing with a group of mixed ages.

3. There is a wide variety among the types of stories so that you can find a story for any mood although the two most common appeals are exciting action and laughter.

4. There are ethical truths within the folk tales. Whether or not you accept all of the ethics as your own, you can better understand the group from which the truths emerged.



Constance Carr

Miss Carr is at present a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Arbuthnot says in *Children and Books*¹ that these truths are predominantly constructive rather than destructive when judged as a whole group. The humble and good will be exalted, virtue will be rewarded, and evil unfailingly punished.

5. These folk tales which are not as familiar to us will help us to understand the parts of the world from which they come. They help us to recognize our common humanity and understand our differences in backgrounds. Three of the authors of the books reviewed made pertinent statements which I particularly liked:

Lucia Merecka Borski (3): "Children will find in them the things that they seek in their stories—liveliness, humor, a sense of people, and of places that are new and strange."

Elizabeth Hough Sechrist (18): "By reading the folk tales of any nation we can better understand how that nation developed, what the people were like, and how they progressed through centuries."

Yoshiko Uchida (20): "It is my hope that along with the folk tales of other lands, they will awaken in readers the realization that all children, in whatever country they may live, have the same love of fun and a good story. I hope, too, that in their own way, they will help to increase among our children a feeling of respect for an understanding of the cultural heritages of other countries and peoples. It is in such small and simple beginnings that I rest my hope for creating 'one world.'"

Criteria for Evaluating Collections of Folk Tales

- I. The stories should be good stories.
A good folk story has a clear robust theme.

¹May Hill Arbuthnot, *Children and Books*, Scott Foresman, 1947, p. 232.

There is plenty of action and the characters do the acting. The story moves swiftly from the opening words into a situation that needs to be solved. The action moves steadily ahead throughout the story, it is logical and plausible, full of suspense, and then reaches a swift, satisfying conclusion.

The themes in the folk tales are easy to spot, many are repetitive from collection to collection, from one part of the world to another. The slow and stolid individual outwits the speedy one whether it is in "Bandalee" (19) when the turtle wins the race from Anansi in Jamaica, or Nasca out wits the supernatural cat in *Tales from Silver Lands* in South America (16). The poor boy wins the princess through his cleverness and kindness, whether it is Jose from Mexico (4) or the "Goatherd Who Won a Princess" in Spain (12).

There is plenty of action. Sometimes a castle is haunted and needs to have the ghosts cleared out by an impervious little tinker (2), or the lost money bags of Neighbor Felix have to be found by Padre Porko (12).

The main characters see that action gets taken. "The Clever Judge" (13) knows how to detect a thief who denies his guilt, or the toad figures out a way to go to a party in the sky (14). In the humorous folk tale the action is sometimes taken in spite of the main character but he is involved in it. Francois Ecrette trusts his friend to take him through the dangerous rapids in the middle of the night but discovers when the trip is over that a bear has been the pilot. (5)

The opening words set the situation and the action begins almost immediately, "When the King of the Golden Island died, just a year later than his wife, he left his little daughter Majka (Maykah) to

reign over his kingdom. The counsellors did not know whom to appoint regent until Majka could reign herself. And while they were deciding what to do, Majka's uncle, her father's brother, hastily surrounded the capital with an army, proclaiming himself regent of the country and guardian of the orphan." (3)

The action moves steadily ahead. The third son, who inherits the talking bird which is obviously less valuable than the bow which always hits its target or the deer which can carry its owner swiftly anywhere, must prove that he is of worth. The talking bird proves valuable in reporting conversations and the young man uses this knowledge to save a kingdom. Victory is almost in sight but the greatest test of all arrives which he cannot solve alone, but here he involves his jealous brothers and their inheritance and together they solve the problem. (4)

The conclusions are satisfying and neatly tied into a bow. When Padre Porko solves the mystery of why Pablo's goose was wasting away, the stork removes the obstruction and the goose has learned not to be so greedy. (12)

Or from the *Tales of a Korean Grandmother* (6) we learn, "With this knowledge Koo became rich beyond telling. And in the gate of his fine new house he cut a doghole for his faithful friend, who had saved him from starving. There, day and night, like our own four-footed gate guard, the fat dog lay watching in peace and well-fed contentment. But all through his life he never again killed a mouse nor made a friend of a cat."

Sometimes the story ends with a word of warning such as ends, "Jean Labadie's Big Black Dog," (5) "So remember this,

my friends: If you must make up a big black dog, do not allow others to help or



Padre Porko

you may find that you are no longer the dog's master."

- II. The language of folk tales should be "flowing" . . . appropriate for telling or reading aloud. The language should also "flow" in the spirit of the original tongue. The language or choice of words should set the mood to fit the plot. Descriptive phrases quickly give the setting (never long descriptions). Often rhymes are used to move the story along and give it a lilt and repetitive quality.

The flowing language of the folk tales is, of course, one of the special qualities of these stories which have been told and retold. The collectors who have re-written or translated are most successful when their story-telling style gives the impression of having been lovingly told for many years. Note the "flow" of words in this opening paragraph:

"Anansi was not a great hunter, or a great worker, or a great warrior. His specialty was being clever. He liked to outwit people. He liked to live well, and to have other people do things for him. But because all the people of the country knew about Anansi and had had trouble with him he had to keep thinking of new ways to get something for nothing." (5)

The language or choice of words

should set the mood to fit the plot. How quickly you note the lilt of a happy story from the opening lines of "The Jolly Tailor Who Became King," (3): "Once upon a time, in the town of Taidaraida, there lived a merry little Tailor, Mr. Joseph Nitechka. He was a very thin man and had a small beard of one hundred and thirty-six hairs . . . Nitechka bowed again and hopped three times as he was very polite and he knew that well-bred men thus greeted each other."

Description is brief but to the point, adding to the sensory impressions and always helping the story to move along. The description is scaled not so much to its importance to life as to the needs of the story. It is no wonder the wolf's tongue hung out when she smelled this risotto (11), "It was to be an especially good risotto. The day before, Pietro killed a young cock—a gallo—and Marie plucked him and cleaned him, and covering him with cold water, she put him on the charcoal fire and let him simmer for a long, long time. And then, on the morning of the Madonna's birthday, she cut up the meat—the dark meat and the white meat—and she put it back in the gravy, with some rice, quite a good deal of rice, and some raisins dried from their own grapes the year before, and some chestnuts which had first been roasted brown in the oven,

a handful of herbs, and she put it again on the fire and let it simmer some more. And the more it simmered the richer it grew and the better and better it smelled . . . Maria went back to the risotto. And she stirred it, and turned it, and she stuck in a raisin here and a chestnut there, and it grew richer and richer and more and more delectable."

The use of rhymes or repetitive phrases throughout the story, for added lilt of words, adds to the "flowing" quality of the story. So the owl and old Hunbatz plot against the king's sons by having the owl report to the king every day (16),

"They sing and they play
For half of the day."

The boy in "The Frog" explains his plight and gains his help with aid of this verse (3),

"My wicked stepmother threw me out;
She gave me neither food nor drink
With shouting and beating
She bade me be gone."

Pura Belpre (1) says of the cadence of folk stories, ". . . a grandmother whose stories always ended with a nonsense rhyme or song, setting feet to jump, skip or dance."

III. The characterization should be simple and forthright—no complex personalities. The reader should know quickly who is the right and who is the wrong. The evil is portrayed by horrible villains, the good by upright young men and beautiful, pure girls. The humorous characters are portrayed with sympathetic laughter, "There but for the Grace of God, go I."

Quickly and in simple words the reader identifies who is who and what his qualifications are for deserving good or evil. I.e. note the number of simple details



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which makes you know you'll admire the young man in "Urashima Taro and the Princess of the Sea." (20) "Long, long ago, in a small village of Japan, there lived a fine young man named Urashima Taro. He lived with his father and mother in a thatched-roof house which overlooked the sea. Each morning he was up before the sun and went out to sea in his little fishing boat."

The evil is quickly noted in "A Horned Goat" (3), "There was once a Goat, a wicked horned Goat. She was at war with everyone, did mischief to all, butted with her horns, stamped with her feet, and threatened."

Sometimes the characterization is almost taken for granted by denoting the position or title of the people as in "The



Once the Mullab

Flight" (3), "There was once a Princess betrothed to a handsome prince, but a horrible witch kept her captive on a high mountain." You are to know that a princess is beautiful, kind and good, and that the prince is handsome, strong, and courageous.

In the humorous folk tale the character description adds to the humor such as that of Tante Odette (5), "She was a plump little woman with beady, black eyes, a pouf of a moustache and a double chin. She

lived at the edge of the village in a neat whitewashed house with a sharp roof and two dormer windows. She worked her own little field and cared for her beasts all by herself because she was too stingy to pay anyone to help her. For this reason, things did not always go so smoothly for her. The ox broke through the fence or the well froze over or the roof began leaking."

IV. The collection should be a satisfying collection of stories. The stories should not be so long and complicated in details that the reader loses interest. The book should not be so long in length as to discourage reading. Stories should have a similar style of telling even though plots may differ widely. Too much similarity in plots give a dead-level sameness.

Some of the books seem just right, when you have finished the collection you feel satisfied, even desirous of finding another collection of similar stories by the same compiler. These collections proved satisfying to me: Courlanders (8, 9, 10), Davis' *Padre Porko* (12), Kelsey's *Once the Mullab* (17). Carlson's *Talking Cat* (5), Sherlock's *Anansi the Spider Man* (19), and Uchida's *The Dancing Kettle* (20). Checking back I found no common length to the stories or number of stories to the book, or number of pages in the books so it seems that the authors took just the right amount of words to tell the stories they had to tell.

Arbuthnot says in *Children and Books*, "Today children have turned away from these stories (Arabian Nights) which are exceedingly long and are difficult reading. The modern child seems to lack the time and patience to spend with fantasies which are overdetailed."

Some of the compilers have recognized the advantage of the shorter story and have

broken stories, which might have run continuously, into two or more parts which may be read separately. In *Tales from Silver Lands* (16) there are three stories about the Hero Twins and their army of Four Hundred in which they deal with three giants—one per story—even though you know the threat of all three giants at the beginning. Anita Brenner's book, *The Boy Who Could Do Anything* (4) has two sections of stories dealing with the same characters, the last section, particularly, has each story a part of the others.

Other compilers have felt the need for tying the stories together in some way. Frances Carpenter has the grandmother tell stories to her grandchildren. The story is usually initiated by something the children are doing or some household activity and then the grandmother tells how it was in the times long, long ago. The telling style is necessarily similiar but I feel that

more exciting than the stories. They are the simple "why" stories similar to those of the American Indian which explain the natural phenomena.

The book should not be so long as to discourage reading. A book of folk tales need not be read all at one time. Sometimes they are picked up for occasional sharing, sometimes certain stories are located for comparison of themes and styles. But sometimes folk tales are read in their entirety, particularly by children who go through a period of craving them, as I did, between nine and twelve years of age. Then long books with many stories are overwhelming. Since the stories are complete in themselves it is easier to put the book down never to pick it up again and so some of the prize stories may be missed. The length of the *Tales of a Korean Grandmother* (6) has been mentioned; it contains 32 stories. *Tales from Silver Lands* (16) contains 19 stories which are quite long and the book appears a little overwhelming. There are 54 stories from the Philippines in *Once in the First Times*. The length of the book is definitely oppressive and the shortness and fable style of the first group of stories does not invite further reading.

I found most satisfying those stories with a similar style in the telling. Arbuthnot says in *Children and Books*, "The Grimm Brothers had a scholarly respect for the sources which kept them from tampering with the language or the plots . . . Their kind of scrupulous accuracy in recording folk literature is the standard by which other collections are now judged." I am sure from the introductory comments

²May Hill Arbuthnot. *Children and Books*. Scott Foresman, 1947, p. 207.



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this is an advantage, and the stories have a wide range of plots which seems good, too.

The group of Australian stories in *Written in Sand* (10) are tied together with a plot. In my estimation the plot is

to some of the collections—Davis in *Padre Porko* (12) and Kelsey in *Once the Mullab* (17)—that the compiler has re-



Padre Porko

written for the English version. Perhaps this is more necessary in catching a quality of a people and in translating stories into English than was evident in the German, French, and Scandinavian stories since they are the background of many of the people in the United States. In spite of being rewritten these stories seem to reflect the language of the people in the cadence of expression.

- V. The stories should catch the flavor of the people from which they originate, giving a feeling of how they lived and what they valued. The total impression should be one that is satisfying to the people themselves.

The flavor of the people is how they lived and what they valued—what the people do for a living—hunting, farming, fishing, the kinds of houses they live in and the kind they would like to live in, the kind of food they eat, what is important to them. Cothran says of the Alaskan stories (7), "Legends of the sun become increasingly important as the hours of light grow fewer and more precious." Boggs and Davis' collection of Spanish stories is replete with color making you think of travel posters (2), "Her hair, under the black lace mantilla, was red gold, and she had the long gray eyes of Andalusia and her

eyebrows and lashes were as black as night. Her dress was snow white, the many ruffles edged with scarlet, and on her slender feet she wore scarlet shoes."

What the people value is often most apparent in the conclusion of the story. Here is "The Good Brother's Reward" (6) when he opened the three gourds: "Two men servants stepped out of it. They carried a fine table laden with silver bowls and bottles of wine. 'This bottle contains wine that gives men long life!' said the spirit servants to Sang Hun. 'This bottle has wine which makes the blind to see. And this one will bring back speech to a dumb man.'" (Second gourd) "At once their courtyard was filled with shining chests, with rich silks and rolls of shining grass linen. When the third gourd was opened, there came forth an army of carpenters with tools and strong pieces of excellent wood. Before the bewildered man's eyes there rose from his ground houses with tiled roofs, stables for horses, and storehouses for grain. Into his gates came a long train of bullocks, loaded with furniture, and with rice and other good food to fill his storage jars to the brim."

The "why" stories explain the mysteries of life and even may be looked at in terms of people's religious beliefs. After reading "Teutli, the Mountain That Is Alive" (4) in which the people will not do anything for fear the mountain will take revenge, it is easy to understand what a long time it would take to educate such prejudices out of the people.

The stories should be acceptable to the people from whence they come. The Uncle Bouqui stories (10) are delightful reading but he is always the loser, even though it is his own foolishness that causes

the difficulty. This is the description that is given, "Uncle Bouqui, whose great-grandfather was a Congo man in Africa, is big and black. His skin is thick and wrinkled and his beard and his hair are grey. He has large feet and huge gnarled hands, and his back is strong from a lifetime of labor." Perhaps some caution should be given to using the Uncle Bouqui stories because of the danger of fostering a stereotype where children were already sensitive on the color



Once the Mullah

question. Another area for caution in these stories comes from: "Probably one reason for all the trouble, though, is the man called Ti Malice. He is a little person with reddish-brown skin, and they say his great-grandfather was a Dahomey African." There is still the conflict between these groups in the Caribbean Islands and the question is whether the groups are ready to take stories in which the same type is always the "fall guy."

The same type of criticism might be applied to two stories in *Fairy Tales from Brazil* (14), "How Black Became White," and "How the Pigeon Became a Tame Bird." In the first the little boy's color is changed, "The little old woman and her three beautiful daughters turned to thank the little black boy for what he had done. The little black boy was no longer black. He had been turned white . . . and the little boy who was now white, grew up to be the greatest cavalheiro of them all." In the second story a little black maid imper-

sonates a beautiful maiden and marries the young man, later her evil deed is discovered and she dies so that the man may marry his first true love.

VI. When the author adds explanatory notes, a glossary or pronunciation guide the book is enhanced in value. Perhaps the greatest value is for the adult yet many have sections meant for children.

I was delighted with the additional information in so many of these books. Some of the sections are definitely for the children in which case it may be the first chapter such as in *Anansi the Spider Man* (19) and in *Padre Porko* (12). Other compilers have developed their ideas in a preface which children may or may not read (type is usually smaller). Some add the notes on each story at the conclusion of the book.

Courlander included a "Glossary and Notes on a Pronunciation Guide" to *Fire on the Mountain* (9). Ewers added a glossary to *Written in Sand* (15) which was badly needed for the terms were very strange, unfortunately he did not indicate pronunciation of these strange words along with their definitions. This is a definite handicap for storytelling or reading aloud.

As noted in "Why Use Folk Tales with Children" at the beginning, many of the comments made by the compilers came from these introductions to their books.

The compilers of *Tales of Faraway Folk* (13), stories from out of the way places in middle Europe and Asia, used an excellent technique for giving the story setting in a few brief sentences at the beginning of each story. This was set in italics and did not detract from the story. In fact, I felt it was a worthy addition, i.e.: "Karelia borders on Finland and on the

White Sea. It is a land of lakes and rivers that freeze over in winter, so that you can travel across the ice on a sleigh. In the warm season the main islands are bright with willow trees and birches. There are forests, too, where bears and wolves abound. The people do not tell their stories: they sing them. And they believe that songs can work magic." Then in the following story the man uses his singing magic and travels across the ice in his sleigh.

VII. The bookmaking should be good. The print should be readable, pages uncrowded, and illustrations that catch the mood of the book.

Most of these books are well made with attractive covers, eye-catching in appeal. This seems to be particularly true of the latest additions to the group. The newer books also tend to have satisfying size of type, well-spaced pages, and ample illustration.

The illustrations should catch the flavor of the people and the mood of the



Dancing Kettle

stories. Davis' book, *The Truce of the Wolf* (11), and Sechrist's *Once in the First Times* (18) were inadequately illustrated and what was there didn't catch the flavor of the book.

The illustrations in the other collections may not be to everyone's taste, some were quite stylized or symbolic, but I thought that they were appropriate to the

text. Charlot's illustrations for *The Boy Who Could Do Anything* (4) are stylized but seem to have a spirit of Mexico. There are beautiful drawings by Avery Johnson for *Written in Sand* (15) but they are symbolic rather than descriptive and since the book tends to be obscure this may be used as one more point of rejection by many readers.

Even though the book *The Tiger and the Rabbit* (1) is on poor paper and is crowded, the black and white illustrations by Kay Peterson Parker are delightful in portraying a gay mood.

On to the Collections of Folk Tales

Folk tales have a special place in children's lives and fortunate are the children who have a wealth of collections from which to read. Children can work out their own evaluations although the adult working with them has a role in highlighting their points and in bringing facts to bear where necessary.

All of the collections listed in the bibliography are not equal in merit but even those which do not completely satisfy the criteria have some values. It is well to know them because they might be used for getting a flavor of a people such as the book of Australian folk tales, or for finding themes for comparative purposes such as Sechrist's book of Philippine folk tales.

1. Belpre, Pura. *The Tiger and the Rabbit*, and other Tales. Houghton Mifflin, 1944. Pp. 119. Illustrated by Kay Peterson Parker.
2. Boggs, Ralph Steele, and Davis, Mary Gould. *Three Golden Oranges* and other Spanish Folk Tales. Longmans, Green, 1936. Pp. 137. Illustrated by Emma Brock.
3. Borski, Lucia Merecka, and Miller, Kate B. *The Jolly Tailor*. Longmans, Green, 1928. Pp. 156. Illustrated by Kazmir Klepacki.

4. Brenner, Anita. *The Boy Who Could Do Anything* and other Mexican Folk Tales. Wm. R. Scott, 1942. Pp. 136. Illustrated by Jean Charlot.
5. Carlson, Natalie Savage. *The Talking Cat* and other stories of French Canada. Harper, 1952. Pp. 87. Illustrated by Roger Duvoisin.
6. Carpenter, Frances. *Tales of a Korean Grandmother*. Doubleday, 1947. Pp. 287. Illustrated with reproductions from old Korean Paintings.
7. Cothran, Jean. *The Magic Calabash*. Folk Tales from America's Islands and Alaska. David McKay, 1956. Pp. 88. Illustrated by Clifford N. Geary.
8. Courlander, Harold, and Herzog, George. *The Cow-Tail Switch* and other West African Stories. Holt, 1947. Pp. 131. Illustrated by Madye Lee Chastain.
9. Courlander, Harold, and Leslau, Wolfe. *The Fire on the Mountain* and other Ethiopian Stories. Holt, 1950. Pp. 129. Illustrated by Robert W. Kane.
10. Courlander, Harold. *Uncle Bouqui of Haiti*. Morrow, 1942. Pp. 127. Illustrated by Lucy Herndon Crockett.
11. Davis, Mary Gould. *The Truce of the Wolf*, and other Tales of Old Italy. Harcourt, Brace, 1931. Pp. 125. Illustrated by Jay Van Everen.
12. Davis, Robert. *Padre Porko*, The Gentlemanly Pig. Holiday House, 1948. Pp. 197. Illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg.
13. Deutch, Babette, and Yarmolinsky, Avrahm. *Tales of Faraway Folk*. Harper, 1952. Pp. 68. Illustrated by Irena Lorentowicz.
14. Eells, Elsie Spicer. *Fairy Tales from Brazil*. How and Why Tales from Brazilian Folk-Lore. Dodd, Mead, 1950. Pp. 210. Illustrated by Helen N. Barton.
15. Ewers, John. *Written In Sand*. Dutton, 1947. Pp. 160. Illustrated by Avery Johnson.
16. Finger, Charles J. *Tales from Silver Lands*. Doubleday, Page, 1926. Pp. 225. Illustrated by woodcuts by Paul Honore.
17. Kelsey, Alice Geer. *Once the Mullah*, Persian Folk Tales Retold. Longmans, Green, 1954. Pp. 134. Illustrated by Kurt Werth.
18. Sechrist, Elizabeth Hough. *Once in the First Times*. Folk tales from the Philippines. Macrae Smith, 1949. Pp. 215. Illustrated by John Sheppard.
19. Sherlock, Philip M. *Anansi the Spider Man*, Jamaican Folk Tales. Crowell, 1954. Illustrated by Marcia Brown. Pp. 112.
20. Uchida, Yoshiko. *The Dancing Kettle* and Other Japanese Folk Tales. Harcourt, 1949. Pp. 170. Illustrated by Richard C. Jones.

For decades the English teacher followed a sacrosanct syllabus for the edification of a select group; he was a purveyor of abstruse concepts in archaic language and a guardian of the niceties of grammar. In an attempt to face educational complexities arising from greater heterogeneity of the school population, he wallowed in pedagogical clichés—all valid obliquely—like eye movements, audio-visual techniques, ocre curricula.

Meanwhile, Johnnie was buying comics and pulps for "adventure"; Mary devoured life in the tabloids and stewed in the "celestial garbage" of Hollywood; Mama reveled in saponaceous joy and sorrow via the radio and television; Papa relaxed for six hours watching baseball or enjoying the gyrations of two prognathous wrestlers. Moreover, if one wanted to know "How to—" or wished to form opinions on any current problem, he could turn to the authority of the slicks or the obiter dicta of self-appointed analysts through any of the mass media. cursory scanning of headlines was sufficient.

Bess Lehrman, "An Experiment in the Critical Studies of Mass Media," in *High Points* for October, 1956.

Selecting An Elementary School Dictionary

In elementary school classrooms where language flourishes, the dictionary is one of the most frequently used teaching aids. Formerly, most children were introduced to the dictionary in the fourth grade, whereas today many children at the second grade level are quite familiar with the dictionary and are able to use it effectively. In fact, training for using this aid to language development usually begins in the first grade. It is true, of course, that primary grades children have a different need for the dictionary from that of intermediate grades children, yet the need is just as real.

At the primary grades level the picture dictionary is used partly to help children learn how to spell words independently and partly to learn the meanings of words. To be able to use a dictionary for the first purpose, the child must first have some awareness of the position of letters within the alphabet. In order to use the dictionary effectively for the second purpose, a pupil must have a dictionary that is freely illustrated with simple and clear pictures, is technically accurate in color and other details, and portrays realistically the experiences of children.

While intermediate grades children use a dictionary for the same purposes, their methods of using it are at a more mature level. They learn to use a dictionary to help them perceive words in terms of syllables, to pronounce words independently, to learn the origins of words, and to add depth to their understanding of the meanings of words.

Since the dictionary can increase independence in language growth, it is important that teachers select one that facilitates optimum growth. Four criteria might be applied to aid in the selection.

The *scope* of the dictionary refers primarily to the vocabulary size. The desirable children's dictionary is not necessarily one that has a multitude of words listed. Rather, it is one that offers those meanings which children are most likely to find in their reading and speaking. The listings of some of the best dictionaries today are checked against specific vocabulary lists and therefore include words which it is known children need to use.

Less important indications of scope include the supplementary material such as tables of weights and measures, lists of the presidents of the United States, an atlas of the world, and foreign monetary units. Some children's dictionaries today, like the *Thorndike-Barnhart Beginning Dictionary*, include instructions for children and teachers for learning to use a dictionary and suggested exercises for acquiring the necessary skills. The John C. Winston Company publishes a separate workbook, *Using Your Dictionary*, to serve the same purposes.

The *reliability* of the dictionary is determined by considering the reputation of the publisher and the editor. Some publishers, like the John C. Winston Company, have long established reputations as dictionary publishers, and schools have

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learned to rely upon their publications. Some textbook publishers, too, like the American Book Company, the Row, Peterson Company, and Scott, Foresman and Company have published some excellent editions of dictionaries originally published by reputable dictionary publishers. On the other hand, schools and parents may well be wary of the reliability of some, though not all, dictionaries found on the counters of the dime store or the drug store.

The *format* of the elementary school dictionary is more important than the format of the adult dictionary. The book must first of all be attractive to the child in terms of color of binding; size of print; and color, type, size, and frequency of illustrations. If children are to use dictionaries frequently, they must not be overwhelmed with the difficulty of use. Hence, well-leaded type, suitable margins, reasonably narrow columns, and well-located guide words give the dictionary an inviting appearance and indicate ease of reference to the child. Eliminating usage labels such as *obsolete*, *colloquial*, and *slang* makes it possible for the child to use his dictionary more efficiently. Thumb indexes on intermediate grades dictionaries would be an asset, too, but few children's dictionaries have them.

The *word treatment* refers to such things as pronunciation, definition, spelling, syllabication, and origin of words. Older dictionaries perpetuate the belief that the first pronunciation is better than any which follows, but in the new dictionaries we are told that all pronunciations (and spellings) are equally correct. The pronunciations given, if realistic, are non-regional and are based on actual listening, directly or by radio and TV, to the best

speakers in the country. Some of the newer books have sought to simplify pronunciation through the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet symbol ə, usually called the *schwa*. Opinion, however, is divided on the desirability of using the *schwa*.

The definitions cited in the better intermediate grades dictionaries are those used in the books and magazines read by children of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

Syllabication is indicated in two ways. Most dictionaries divide each boldface entry word into syllables, but in *Webster's Elementary Dictionary* there is no syllabication in entries. The feeling here is that children have very little need for syllabic divisions and that the respelling of the word meets pupils' needs in showing what syllables are accented. The questions of whether boldface entries should be divided into syllables appears to be largely a matter of opinion. Nevertheless, many teachers feel that a non-divided entry is a help to the child, since that is the way he sees the word in his reading.

Scope, reliability, format, and word treatment are important considerations in selecting dictionaries for elementary school children. Few teachers today will deny that pupils should have a good dictionary readily available at all times, both at home and at school, for optimum language development. In the classroom an adequate number of dictionaries also is very important. However, just *any* dictionary will not serve the children's and teachers' purposes. The following chart may help teachers and parents in selecting a useful dictionary, thereby making the child's study of words a pleasant and profitable venture.

Picture Dictionaries

- | <i>Title</i> | <i>Major Features and Evaluation</i> |
|---|--|
| <p><i>The Golden Dictionary</i>
Simon and Schuster, Inc.
630 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y.</p> <p>Price: Goldenkraft Library Bound edition \$4.25</p> <p>Copyright: 1944</p> | <p>By Ellen W. Walpole. 96 pages. 1030 entries in large type. Entries checked against at least six standard word lists. 1500 full color illustrations by Gertrude Elliott. Different meanings clearly numbered. 322 words grouped under basic concepts such as <i>machine</i> and <i>acts</i>, all illustrated. Will interest ages 4-9. Can be read by grades 2-4. Large size (10" x 12¾"). Approved by <i>Booklist</i>, <i>Library Journal</i>, <i>Children's Catalog</i>.</p> |
| <p><i>The Golden Picture Dictionary</i>
Simon and Schuster, Inc.</p> <p>Price: Goldenkraft Library Bound edition \$2.25</p> <p>Copyright: 1954</p> | <p>By Lilian Moore. 80 pages. More than 800 entries. Illustrated in full color by Beth and Joe Krush. Can be read by grades 3-5. Recommended by ACE, International.</p> |
| <p><i>My First Dictionary</i>
Grossett and Dunlap, Inc.
1107 Broadway
New York 10, N. Y.</p> <p>Price: \$1.50</p> <p>Copyright: 1948</p> | <p>By Laura Oftedal and Nina Jacob, University of Chicago, 140 pages. 592 entries. Every word illustrated. Excellent full color illustrations by Pelagie Doan. Wide margins and excellent spacing. Entries in very large print in contrasting pink color. Single column per page. Entries checked against several standard vocabulary lists.</p> |
| <p><i>My Little Golden Dictionary</i>
Simon and Schuster, Inc.</p> <p>Price: Trade edition \$.25
Goldenkraft edition: \$1.04</p> <p>Copyright: 1949</p> | <p>By Mary Reed and Edith Osswald. 56 pages. 267 entries. Full color, simple illustrations by Richard Scarry. Particularly appealing to pre-school children. Entries in very large type. Single column per page. Convenient small size (6½" x 7¾"). Approved by <i>Booklist</i>, <i>Library Journal</i>, <i>Elementary English</i>, ACE, International.</p> |
| <p><i>Pixie Dictionary</i>
The John C. Winston Co.
1010 Arch St.
Philadelphia 7, Pa.</p> <p>Price: \$1.12</p> <p>Copyright: 1953</p> | <p>Written and compiled by Elizabeth Clemons. 64 pages. 290 entries. Every word illustrated with full color illustrations by Jean M. McLaughlin, Janilee Middlebrooks, William A. Hildebrandt. Entries checked against International Kindergarten Union list, Gates primary word list and Rinsland list. Each word defined in not more than eight words. Each meaning followed by an example. Each form of irregular verbs and each irregular plural of a noun treated separately.</p> |

*Title**Major Features and Evaluation**The Rainbow Dictionary*

The World Publishing Co.
119 W. 57th St.
New York 19, N. Y.

Price: \$4.95

Copyright: 1947

By Wendell W. Wright, Dean of the School of Education, Indiana University. 433 pages. 2300 entries. Over 1100 illustrations in four colors by Joseph Low. Excellent spacing makes easy reading. Multiple meanings clearly indicated. Many well-chosen quotations from children's literature illustrate many of the words. Author presents words in several ways, including use of synonyms and antonyms.

Words I Like to Read and Write

Row, Peterson and Co.
104 S. Lexington Ave.
White Plains, N. Y.

Price: \$2.00

Copyright: 1955

Written and compiled by Mabel O'Donnell and Willmina Townes. Designed for average and superior first grade pupils, second semester. Especially useful to pupils using *The New Alice and Jerry Basic Readers*. Includes 374 words from the first year vocabulary. Expanded to include many simple *s* forms. Full color realistic illustrations by Florence and Margaret Hoopes. Simple text material. Could be used as picture story book by immature first grade groups. Useful at beginning of second grade for immature or slow learning children not yet competent in use of total first grade vocabulary. 160 pages. 639 entries. Attractive size approximately 7 1/8" x 5 5/8".

Intermediate Grades Dictionaries*Illustrated Golden Dictionary for Young Readers*

Simon and Schuster, Inc.

Price: Trade edition: \$4.95

Goldencraft edition: \$6.65

Copyright: 1951

By Stuart A. Courtis and Garnette Watters. 544 pages. Over 7,500 entries. 10,000 variants. 2,120 pictures in full color by Beth and Joe Krush. Attractive end papers. Authors have wide teaching experience. Prepared after years of extensive planning and study. Almost every word illustrated in a complete sentence. Entries checked with standard word lists. Easy to read. Will interest ages 8 up. Starred in *Library Journal* and *Junior Libraries*.

Standard Junior Dictionary

Funk and Wagnalls Co.
153 East 24th St.
New York 10, N. Y.

Price: \$3.50

Copyright: 1953

752 pages. More than 39,000 entries. 1,500 illustrations in half-tone with three dimensional effect. Examples of correct usage in sentences and phrases given frequently. Derivations given in heavy type. Has two pronunciation keys on every page—one for pupils educated in use of older diacritical marking system, one for simplified pronunciation. 4,000 synonyms. Both guide words appear only at upper outside edge of each page. Primary stress indicated by single accent mark. Secondary stress shown by double accent mark. Devotes a few pages to a word quiz and to suggestions for using this dictionary. Suitable primarily for grades 5-8.

Title

Major Features and Evaluation

Thorndike-Barnhart Beginning Dictionary

Scott, Foresman and Co.
19-00 Pollitt Drive
Fair Lawn, N. J.

Price: \$2.84

Copyright: 1952

For grades 4-5. 645 pages. 14,085 entries. 1,419 illustrations. Uses *schwa* in pronunciation symbols. Minimum key words at bottom of each right hand page. Uses sentences freely to illustrate words in context. Guide word at top center of each column. Includes 70 excellent lessons for step-by-step instruction in dictionary skills.

Thorndike-Barnhart Junior Dictionary

Scott, Foresman and Co.

Price: \$3.04

Copyright: 1952

For grades 5-8. 784 pages. 43,199 entries. 1,908 illustrations. Entries and meanings selected with aid of Thorndike-Lorge list. Irregular spellings of plurals, nouns, some verb forms, and comparison of adjectives given in boldface type at end of definitions. Basic key words at bottom of each right hand page. Pronunciation symbols include *schwa*. Easy to read.

Webster's Elementary Dictionary

American Book Co.
55 Fifth Ave.
New York 3, N. Y.

Price: \$2.92.

Copyright: 1956

610 pages. 19,711 entries. Selection based on thorough reading of 159 series of textbooks and 625 issues of children's magazines. No syllabication in entries. Places stress mark at beginning of stressed syllable. Always uses hyphens between syllables. Simplified diacritical marking system includes *schwa*. Pronunciations realistic. Slant lines rather than parentheses used before and after pronunciations. Definitions arranged in historical order of use. Key words appear only on front and back end papers. Uniform sizes and kinds of type used throughout. Guide words near edges of pages. Attractive, easy to read.

The Winston Dictionary for Schools

The John C. Winston Co.

Price: Plain edition \$3.20
Thumb indexed \$3.80

Copyright: 1956

950 pages plus appendix and atlas. 46,000 entries. Available in shorter edition of 32,550 entries. Revised and edited every year. 1,729 illustrations. Easy to read type. Pronunciation key at bottom of every page. Definitions masterpieces of simplicity. Profusely illustrated with verbal illustrations to show the use of words in context. Very attractive binding.

What Is Good Literature for Children?

What is a good book for Johnny to read? No earlier generation has been confronted with the number and variety of children's books being published today. Choice must be made among those books and a fortunate choice may provide Johnny a book so fascinating that he will learn to read it.

The short answer to the question What is good literature for children? is an obvious statement always needing re-emphasis: good literature for children is first of all good literature. The fairy tales of Anderson and Perrault are drastically simplified stories, but they share common characteristics with *Paradise Lost* and *The Brothers Karamazor*. In fact, values such as dramatic story and vivid action are heightened rather than lessened in the juvenile tales. The child's book should, if anything, be more exquisite in art with a more direct appeal to the keener sensations of childhood. This being true, the best book for a child may be read with aesthetic pleasure by his parents.

Educational circles are justly concerned with relating the child's reading to his own experience. But if we remember that children need not be burdened with the detailed precision of a Henry James or the psychological exploration of a William Faulkner, we need also to remember that children possess the wit and imagination to appreciate much that is far beyond their own limited past and present.

A good writer for children makes no condescension to his audience. The fact

that Dumas and Scott wrote dramatic, action-filled stories for adults, whom they addressed as equals, undoubtedly makes for their wide popularity among adolescents. Writing down is a vice fatal to art. Lewis Carroll, one is sure, would have scorned to consult a graded vocabulary list. Yet children, whose preferences determine, in the end, what they read, have for generations delighted in his *Alice in Wonderland*.

Involved in all discussions of literary standards are plot, characterization, treatment of theme, point of view, dialogue, etc. The most immediate interest of the child is in plot. The best plot proceeds in clear-cut fashion from the incentive moment, which reveals the conflict which occasions the story, through a series of complications to a climax or peak of intensity, followed by a resolution of the entanglements. This is the general plan of Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* and of Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit*. There seems to be more reason than usual for objecting to the multiplication of plots and subplots in juvenile stories. Such vices as undue reliance on coincidence, too great reliance on suspense, or failure to make a professional use of such devices as foreshadowing of coming events is no more excusable in juvenile books than in adult fiction. Simplicity, unity, intensity of action, and comparative brevity are the essential characteristics one should remember in choosing the good plot for children. The fairy tales

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and the stories of Beatrix Potter, in general, possess these characteristics.

Whether we should prefer the point of view to be first person, third person, omniscient, or whatever, can hardly be categorically ruled upon. All points of view may be effective, but probably the third person is most common in children's literature.

To say that children, particularly small children, are interested first of all in plot is not, of course, to say that they have little interest in character. The appeal of Long John Silver and the many unforgettable characters that older children have discovered in Dickens amply indicate the appeal of vivid characterization. The requirement is always that the characters come alive.

If they can arise from the page and talk, the author has succeeded. There is little reason for tolerating juvenile dialogue which is out of character, or in which all characters talk as much alike as characters in a comic strip. Dialogue effectively used advances the story and gives insight into the personality of the speaker. Children, of course, respond easily to the appeal of dramatic presentation. They may skip description and exposition, but conversation they are sure to read.

Among other qualities that help to make a "good book" is the effective development of a theme. The twentieth-century writer avoids ending his piece with a neat statement of the moral. He is more subtle, at least more indirect, than Longfellow and Aesop. Yet the modern writer, like Kipling in *The Jungle Book*, has a definite theme. In *The Jungle Book* that theme is fair play, "obeying the law of the jungle."

Construction of the story, intensity of action, character portrayal, effective dialogue, clarity of theme—all are at least as important in literature for children as in adult fiction. Furthermore, such matters concern those who read as much as those who write. Setting provides still another dimension for the child's story as for the adult's. Place and time for the child should probably be more clearly sketched than for his parents. Perhaps all description should be similarly heightened for the unsatiated child. Description should appeal to as many of the senses as possible, not to the visual sense alone.

Probably the best single test for style is reading aloud. Simplicity, clear expression, and appropriate prose rhythm is thereby revealed or shown lacking. The King James Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress* possess this oral quality of style to an unusual degree.

Turning from the technical to the humanistic values of children's literature, we are probably justified in saying that permanent standards of taste are being formed by the child's reading. This is not to say that the child who reads trash or who reads nothing is forever lost to something called "culture." It is to say that the child who reads such touchstones of excellence as Lewis Carroll, Swift, and Hawthorne is being helped to form judgments when his mind is most impressionable.

Besides literary appreciations, reading provides escape, amusement and information. Concern with the aesthetic should not obscure the fact that children read to know about their physical world, its laws, its people, and innumerable other subjects. This curiosity is sometimes the motive which leads children to books. More fre-

quently, perhaps, the introduction comes through the quest for vicarious adventure. Escape from the pressures of reality is justifiable and should be open to children as well as adults. The danger is that constant identification with the heroes and heroines of third-rate books may be emotionally degrading. The imagination may be dulled and the intellect corrupted with views false to life. Books of this caliber find their natural antidote in the "good book," which presents things as they are.

The child's book should to the fullest extent, follow two rules. First, it should possess the viewpoint which the ethical experience of the race indicates is "moral." Secondly, it should avoid moralizing. There is, in literature, a moralistic paradox, which makes effectiveness elude the story teller who preaches. The way of art is

oblique. The best books for cultivating a fine ethical sense are simply the best books, from which the child preferably makes a free choice.

A quick, easy way of distinguishing good books for children from bad would be most useful. Yet formulas are not wisely applied to creative art. We must be dependent on sometimes difficult to interpret critical standards. It seems clear, however, that good stories should have such qualities as originality, style which appeals, skillful plot development and convincing characterization. Moreover, it seems clear that a good book is an experience which informs or inspires or gives appreciations. Perhaps we may say quite simply that when children adopt it and adults find value in it, we have found a good book for children.

The current Lewis and Clark Expedition cartoon strip could be copied as an example in teaching narrative writing. In about ten illustrations, an incident of the expedition is set out with a paragraph to explain the progress, besides the conversation of characters in the "ballons" with the pictures.

For instance, Chapter 24 has a paragraph: "In the summer of 1806, three parties were heading for the country where the Yellowstone meets the Missouri. In the north, Capt. Lewis was pushing down the Missouri. To the south, Capt. Clark was bringing a larger party down the Yellowstone. Sgt. Pryor was traveling overland with Clark's horses. Indian horse thieves sneaked on Pryor's camp one night and made off with their horses."

Some of the conversation is, "It rides

fine. We'll make it easy, lads!" "Horse thieves raided us, Captain!" "So they have gone on ahead. We'll be meeting soon." "An Indian ambush!" "No Injins, Cap'n. Just pore blind Pete."

Besides historical episodes, book reviews can be condensed as if they were to be made into cartoon strips. The word cartoon comes from Latin, *charta*, sheet of paper. The dictionary defines cartoon as 1. An artist's full-size design or study to be transferred or copied, and 2. A large pictorial sketch, especially a pictorial caricature.

Reference to all cartoon strips as comic strips is misleading, as many of them are not comical. Narrative writing for cartoon strips can be fun, but it need not be merely for caricatures.

Louise Hovde Mortensen

Play Ball

Does your class droop when you say, "Take pencil and paper. We are going to write a paragraph"?

Then try this new approach. Say instead, "Class, let's have a ball game!"

Can't you see their flame of interest brighten?

It is as easy as this: Divide the class into two teams. Present a topic or let the child choose his own. Then each player writes a paragraph about the chosen subject. A time limit of five minutes or so might be set, especially when the class becomes more proficient.

Papers are scored in this manner: no errors, a home run or one score; one error, third base; two errors, second base; three errors, first base; four errors, out.

Like magic the child wants to make his paper *perfect*, no spelling errors, no mistakes in punctuation, capitalization, or anything else. He becomes extremely critical of his own work and checks and double checks every detail. He is encouraged to use the dictionary for spelling help, but the teacher will give any other specific help for which he asks, but will not give a check of the whole paragraph at this time.

When the papers are corrected, each team totals its scores and the winning team is found. Or this may be called the first inning with eight more to go.

At the outset a stress for perfection is

enough. When the group is making high scores regularly it is time to add a new factor. Those who can make their paragraphs especially interesting can score an extra point or an RBI (run batted in). Watch them put their descriptive words and phrases to work then!

A short ball game played several times a week and consisting of a paragraph containing only three or more sentences will give greater proficiency than longer writing exercises at infrequent intervals. Besides, it is a small task to check such short pieces, and a five minute warmup of this kind will leave plenty of time to proceed with the regular "lesson."

Another interesting factor can result if the teacher will read a few of the best paragraphs to the class, perhaps omitting the writer's name. Some papers can also be projected with the opaque machine to show good form and neatness.

When the child can write one interesting, perfect paragraph day after day it is an easy step to proceed to longer pieces.

And what has he been doing? Not studying English, not trying to digest a dry piece of grammar. No, he has been building pride and the habit of perfect performance while having a wonderful time playing a ball game.

So—batter up!

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Tete-A-Tete Lessons Develop Independent Readers

From the time I was a little girl sitting impatiently in reading class waiting for my turn to read, on through my years of teaching I've been wishing I could do something about this waste of time in the reading program. This year, encouraged by my curriculum consultant, I have tried a program in my third grade that I feel has many advantages over the three traditional reading groups.

For pre-planning I arranged books of like levels on shelves covered with varying colors of shelf paper. There were six to eight different titles on each shelf. Even on the red shelf (level 1²) there was quite a range of difficulty and subject matter. This was, of course, true of each shelf.

I also made a 4 x 6 card for each child. The front of each card had the child's name in the upper right hand corner. In the upper left hand corner I put an X in color to designate his approximate reading level as determined by his records. These colors corresponded with the color on the shelves. Also on the front of the card I listed the books he had read last year.

Each day approximately forty-five minutes are spent on reading skills and thirty minutes on independent reading.

The skills are presented and demonstrated, and then the children work independently on three days each week. The other two days are used for a period of working together to correct mistakes, for further practice, or for re-presentation as needed. On these two days children who

don't need help are excused from class session to have free time for quiet activity of their own choosing. Ideally, these children would choose to read, but this does not always happen.

Each child is told to choose the book he wants from a shelf of a particular color. No book may be put back on the shelf until checked by the teacher. A move to another shelf is determined by the child's own progress. When a new shelf is started, the basic book is required reading. In this way every child is getting the basic vocabulary. If a child asks for a book from another shelf I let him try. In most cases the child has come back and asked to go back to the shelf he had originally been assigned. This gives the child a chance to make an evaluation of his own ability. One child read a book much below his reading level. Together teacher and child evaluated this reading experience and decided that sometimes a book is worthwhile because of the enjoyment it gives or the information it presents. Another child wanted a book from a more advanced level and proved that she was capable of handling this level, because she was willing to put forth the extra effort required.

During the independent reading period I work with one child at a time at my desk. I ask questions about stories and listen to re-reading and sight reading. In pre-reading children underline difficult words

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so that I may give help before oral reading. I check on information gained, ask about likes and dislikes, help with word attack problems, and present new vocabulary. On the back of each child's card I record the date and a brief comment about that session.

Theoretically each child has one ten minute conference each week. I found I could not hold to a rigid schedule and that this was not essential. I check dates to be sure no child is missing a turn but have stopped trying to give exactly the same amount of time to each child each turn. This type of reading program makes adjustment much easier for the child who has been absent.

On the front of each card I list the books the child reads and underline with color corresponding to shelves which gives a quick indication of level.

Each child can be started where he needs to start and can progress at his own rate. There is no frustration because of lack of ability to keep up or because one wants to move faster. There is no waste of time while one child gets help. At first a few children seemed to need the challenge of a group but individual conferencing seemed

to take care of this. The above average readers are having a chance to move ahead quickly and to broaden the scope of their reading; the average readers will not be pushed into, or held back in a mediocre group; the slow readers are facing their problems without added frustrations of failure in a group. All are developing individual study and self-evaluation habits better than the usual program allows. They are also learning to be discriminating in their choice of reading material.

Achievement tests were given at the beginning of the year and will be given at the end of the year to determine the extent of reading growth. Total growth can never be measured. A lethargic child suddenly sparkles. After recess coats come off quickly so books can be read. Friendship between pupil and teacher thrives on a shared chuckle. Children's satisfaction brings comments like these: "I like a chance to work privately with teacher," "I can get help with things *I* need," "I would have missed so many good stories if I hadn't had time to read so much," "I can read more because we don't have to wait for the class to keep up," "I like to have time for silent reading."

Man's capacities have never been measured; nor are we to judge of what he can do by any precedents, so little has been tried.

—Thoreau

The Talking Mailbox

It is a pleasant experience to take a group of six or seven year olds to visit the post office, but many times I have been bothered by the fact that there is not enough carry-over when the group gets back to school. Of course, they can talk about the trip. They can build an impressive looking post office. They can appoint a postmaster and a mail carrier to deliver the mail within the school. Each time, we have tried to arrange some experience that would provide a nice follow-up and give the group a chance to use their post office experience as a basis for engaging in some activity that would be of service to all the school.

This year I felt that we really found one of our best follow-up experiences. About the time of our visit to our local post office, the New York City Post Office was experimenting with a talking mailbox. The children read about it and decided that they would like to try the idea of a talking mailbox at Fox Meadow School.

We placed a mailbox outside our classroom. Together, we wrote a letter to all the classes explaining how our plan would work. We asked the children if they had any questions that they would like to have answered, they should make use of our talking mailbox. The children were to write out their questions and tack them on the bulletin board beside the talking mailbox. The questions were to be signed with their name and room number. Anyone who saw a question on the bulletin board he would like to answer was to tack the answer beside the question on the

board. The questions and the answers were then put in an envelope in the talking mailbox. Each day our mailman delivered all the answers to the ones who had asked the questions.

We were pleased when our bulletin board and the talking mailbox became the center of attention. We received questions from children, teachers, and parents. More than one hundred and fifty questions were answered and delivered in the four weeks we kept the talking mailbox alive. Several parents as well as teachers joined with the children in answering some of the questions. One fifth grade class took the responsibility for looking up answers to some of the more difficult questions in our school library.

A study of the questions shows that they covered all areas of interest: science, sports, health, music, politics, current events. The kindergarten children were endless with such questions as: "How do you make guns?" "How are victrola records made?" "How does dirt come into the earth?" "How do you make cloth?" It was helpful that one of the third grades was studying about clothing and they paid a visit to the kindergarten to answer the particular question about how cloth was made. A sixth grade boy invited the kindergarten children to the visual aids room to give them a demonstration on how the movie machine worked. The school nurse found an opportunity to enlarge on some of the answers to questions regarding

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health. Some of the fathers answered questions that were related to their businesses. Every question from, "Where do jumping beans come from?" to "How many people live in Scarsdale?" was answered. Some questions such as, "Will the Yankees win the pennant?" found many children who felt they knew the answer. A few personal

questions were asked and returned to their owners marked: "Too personal for us to answer." When the talking mailbox closed for the year we were asked by many children whether we would have another one next year. The children were unanimous in replying that they hoped so.

NEAL R. EDMUND

Story Writing in the Seventh Grade

The present survey was designed with two purposes in mind. The first and main purpose was to determine the attitude of seventh grade children toward writing stories. The second was to obtain information about their story writing behavior.

In the latter part of the spring semester, 1955, a sample of 127 children, taken from a selected number of public schools in Central New York, were asked the following questions. Do you like to write stories? How many stories have you written this school year? Did you write them in school? Outside of school? Both in and out of school?

A story was defined so that it included a narration of past events, an account of some incident, a report or statement, an anecdote, and narratives in prose or verse.

Answers to the foregoing questions fell into four categories. Seventy-three of the 127, fifty-eight per cent of the pupils, answered affirmatively. The mean number of stories written by this group was 4.65 for the school year. Thirty-two of the seventy-three had written one or more stories outside of school.

Forty-three or thirty-two per cent of the total group answered negatively. The

mean number of stories for the group was 2.08 for the school year. Most of the stories were written in school, with only nine members reporting that they had written one or more stories outside of class assignment.

Eight pupils, six per cent, answered, "sometimes." The mean number of stories for the school year was four. Five members of this group had written one or more stories outside of school.

The remaining five members of the 127 reporting, answered, "sort of," or "it depends." The pupils in this group responded in roughly the same manner as the "sometimes" group.

It would seem that the latter two groups are quite similar to the "yes" group, thus bringing the proportion of those desiring to write stories to about sixty-eight per cent. While this is an encouraging percentage, there are still some questions to be raised regarding the other, approximately thirty per cent. Could members of this group have enjoyed writing at some time or other before reaching the seventh

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grade and changed their minds? Could it be expected that a smaller percentage of children enjoy trying to express themselves through writing in the grades below seven and a greater percentage from seventh onward?

Unfortunately, the answers to the above questions are not available. But perhaps the answer to a more important question can be obtained. Should not a greater proportion of our children want to write? Writing is an important form of creative expression and has long been a fundamental part of the public school curriculum. Should we be satisfied with roughly one-third of our pupils showing a dislike for creative writing?

If we are not satisfied, we ought to find out why children do not like to write and help them develop a liking for writing. There is much evidence that we like to do what we do well and that we learn to do things well by doing them, thinking about them, and trying to improve ways of doing them. There is also evidence that undue concern for form and strong criticism is not helpful in teaching children how to write well. Nor does overstressing these factors enhance children's desire to write.

The mean number of stories written by the total group was 3.98. Fourteen was the

greatest number written by any pupil and some had written none. Forty-six of the pupils, thirty-six per cent, reported they had written stories outside of school, without school assignment or guidance. If the mean number of stories written had been based solely on required in-school writing, the mean number would obviously have been much smaller.

If the findings of this study are indicative of the emphasis currently placed on writing experiences of children, it appears obvious that more attention is necessary. Frontier thinkers in education continue to stress the importance of creative writing. It has been pointed out again and again that creative writing helps to develop thinking and expression. It provides reinforcement for spelling, handwriting, and good usage, and it helps to develop an appreciation for our language and literature. Consequently, creative writing aids in the development of critical reading and other language arts skills. That creative writing is important can hardly be doubted, yet our elementary school children are actually writing fewer than four stories during the period of a whole school year. Can we honestly contend that we are providing sufficient time and guidance for the writing experiences of our children?

The Sun and The Moon

The sun is a daddy. The moon is a mummy. All the little stars are babes. The sun goes out in the morning to the office. Mummy stays at home. Daddy comes in the night. He takes rest. Mummy will take all the babes for a walk in the sky so that they do not disturb Daddy. The stars shine and play. They are so beautiful. They go home only in the morning. Now the stars are small but they will become like Mummy. Then we shall have many moons in the sky.

Aruna Kumaran, 6 years old, Izatnagar
From *Shankar's Weekly*,
Children's Art Number, 1954-55,
New Delhi, India.

Improving Reading through Listening

Teachers of language recognize that language power is developed in a social situation. They recognize too that the process of communication always involves thought, expression in either speaking or writing, and reception and comprehension either by listening or reading. Furthermore, they are aware that, from the grades through graduate school, the effectiveness of our instruction depends in large part upon the receptive skills of reading and listening.

The modern academic term "communication" acknowledges a basic relationship between reading and listening. Both these skills are receptive or impressive; both are concerned with receiving ideas from others (12, p. 553). After all, the word that was never spoken cannot be written down. Since listening and reading are intimately related, it follows that improvement in one may result in improvement of the other. The purpose of this paper then is to point out processes involved in the development of reading and listening reception, comprehension, and vocabulary; and to make several recommendations for improvement of reading through listening.

The young learner arrives at an understanding of a sentence or paragraph or a longer selection in essentially the same way that he arrives at the comprehension of verbal material when it is read to him. In the one case, however, the pupil recognizes the words in the selection by means of oral stimuli reaching the ear; in the other by means of visual stimuli reaching the eye (10, p. 356). A written text must

be visible; a spoken text must be audible. The former must be legible; the latter, intelligible (6, p. 127). The silent reader sees and comprehends; the listener hears and comprehends. Visual memory is necessary for reading; memory for sound imagery is necessary for listening (18, p. 5).

If the pupil can recognize the printed words as accurately and readily as he can recognize spoken language, the process of comprehension is essentially the same, and what he understands in the one case will be substantially what he understands in the other. What he understands depends upon his mental ability to get meanings from verbal stimuli, and these meanings, in turn, are contingent upon and determined by all his previous experiences. When one considers the variety of ways in which children can comprehend meaning, it is well to keep in mind that comprehension in reading is as subtle, as selective, as intelligent, and as varied in character as comprehension in listening. In both reading and listening, comprehension depends upon: (1) the accuracy of the perception of the words, and (2) the kinds of meanings evoked once the words are recognized (10, p. 356).

Actually, comprehension difficulties are found in both reading and listening, although they are more numerous in reading. Reading materials are probably at least two grade levels below listening difficulty—tenth grade reading material is about twelfth grade listening material (8,

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p. 199; 18, p. 5). Gates states, "If difficulties in word recognition and other mechanical matters are eliminated the child can probably understand, during reading, material about as complex or as long or as difficult as he can understand in spoken form" (10, p. 357). If this is true, then retardation in reading is apparently the reason why the aural comprehension of so many high school students is better than their reading comprehension (18, p. 5).

Other difficulties may be noted. The reader can vary his speed of comprehension with the difficulty of the material; he can skim and skip the lines that are familiar or uninteresting (8, p. 198). He can re-read if he has missed a point, or he can stop to reflect on a line or phrase. On the other hand, the listener has to follow the tempo of the speaker; he cannot skim, skip, and select passages to fit his needs. The listener's comprehension may be affected by the speaker's inflections, enunciation, mannerisms, facial expressions, dress, personality, and general delivery (18, p. 6).

A number of studies have compared hearing comprehension with reading comprehension. Brown has noted that auding ability supports reading ability during the first years in school in which children learn to recognize the visual representation of words whose sound and sense are quite familiar (3). In other words, the substantial control over the tongue and ear which a boy or girl brings to school should be widely used to facilitate learning during those years in which the child is acquiring control over the tool of reading. As a result of his study of factors associated with reading readiness, Gates found that the most important prognostic sign for progress in

beginning reading is the ability to listen to a story and furnish a reasonable ending (9). Young discovered that intermediate children who do poorly in comprehending through reading do poorly in comprehending through listening. In his study no child was found to be in the highest quartile in one mode and in the lowest in the other (20, p. 33). Larsen and Feder, in a study of importance to reading and listening, sought to determine the common and differential factors in reading and hearing comprehension. They concluded that there is a reliable tendency for scores in reading comprehension to be higher than those for listening comprehension with material of comparable difficulty. However, less superiority of reading over listening is found for those of low scholastic aptitude (15, pp. 241-252).

A number of studies have attacked the problem of measuring the influence of listening upon reading. Spache suggested that measures of auding ability indicate potential ceilings for reading ability (17, pp. 249-253). In a study of the teachability of listening, James I. Brown of the University of Minnesota found that students with higher listening scores showed greater average improvement in remedial reading than the students with the same or lower listening scores (4, pp. 85-93).

Since comprehension and reading comprehension are highly related (15, p. 250), correlations ranging from r of approximately .60 to r of .82, vocabulary in beginning readers is limited largely to words in the oral vocabulary of children (2, p. 166). Listening to correct English helps to improve recognition of the same expression in print. Said another way, listening enlarges the pupil's stock of

meanings. Recognizing and comprehending words is more easily accomplished when the words met in reading are not only in the listening but also in the speaking vocabulary. Hildreth's study of children's word knowledge showed that printed words most easily learned are those in the child's everyday conversation (13, p. 616). Another study of Hildreth's showed that children from cultured homes learn to read easily the language that is already familiar to them from stories and conversation; whereas children from illiterate homes have more trouble with reading (14, p. 538).

This brings us to the major factor common to reading and listening—words and their meanings. Lorge tells us, "The words people use in speech or in writing, or read in books, or hear in speech do not stand for a single meaning or a simple referent . . . Meaning is a function of the ideational and emotional experiences of the interpreter and user of verbal symbols" (16, p. 552).

Reading depends upon sight vocabulary; listening depends upon hearing vocabulary (18, p. 5). In the lower grades a child's hearing vocabulary is larger than his reading vocabulary. As he develops his ability to read, the difference in size between his listening and his reading vocabulary becomes less. Armstrong compared the size and composition of children's **auding** and **reading** vocabularies, using Stanford-Binet lists, and reported that the significance of score differences decreased somewhat with age (1). He determined too that auding vocabulary increased in size at a constant rate and reading vocabulary at a mildly positive accelerated rate until in later elementary grades, the latter

approached the former. In fact, it is a common occurrence for the high school and adult reader to develop a greater reading than hearing vocabulary. Young reported that greatest gains in reading vocabulary scores were made by college students who read practice materials aloud and the smallest by those using auding alone, though apparently no independent measure of auding vocabulary itself was used (19, pp. 273-276).

With these facts as a preamble, let us ask the question: How can teachers safeguard and promote the greatest potential of the reading and listening processes? The data seem to substantiate several principles for improving reading through listening:

1. Certainly a major problem in the teaching of reading and listening at all levels—elementary school, secondary school, and college—is that of identifying students who are performing below their capacity. The reading-listening comparison furnishes a good index of educability, and it points the way to possible diagnosis and remedy. Listening scores, Goldstein informs us, may play a major role in identifying problem cases, both in reading and listening. The fact that a poor pupil scores considerably higher in listening than in reading comprehension means that he probably has undeveloped potential in reading and is in need of remedial instruction. He may have poor vision, or he may not have mastered the mechanics of reading. Provided there is no visual defect, the prospect for reading improvement is encouraging. Emphasis might well be placed on reading mechanics. The fact that a pupil scores considerably higher in reading than in listening comprehension may signify the presence of a hearing defect or the

need for special training in auditory skills. The fact that a pupil scores low in both reading and listening comprehension may indicate visual and auditory defects, or low intelligence, or both (11, p. 66). Certainly, he is poor potential material for high school and college work and is not likely to be improved except by extensive and prolonged remedial help. The pupil should be tested for vision and hearing, and attention should be given to the improvement of comprehension.

2. Dr. Emmett Betts once said that, while it started over a century ago, attention to individual differences is still just a trend. Perhaps he is a little pessimistic. Maybe we have not achieved so much in basing teaching on individual needs, but surely we have made a start. At any rate, the reading-listening comparisons point the way to information pertaining to the pupil's strengths and weaknesses. With this knowledge we will be able to build instruction around individual differences. Those low in scholastic aptitude and general reading ability comprehend almost as well by reading as by listening. In other words, for the below-average students, listening is more efficient than reading. On the other hand, the median groups show a slight superiority in favor of reading comprehension. The group high in scholastic aptitude shows a definite superiority in reading comprehension (15, p. 252).

3. Children need training and guidance in mastering a sight vocabulary. Likewise they need instruction that will build up a wide and meaningful listening vocabulary. Otherwise, much of the oral instruction goes over their heads. The fact that listening vocabulary has a tendency to lag behind as pupils progress through the ele-

mentary school and high school is easy to explain: so many unfamiliar technical and abstract terms are introduced in the expanding curriculum that pupils are left with hazy and incomplete understanding of the words or terms they hear used in their lessons (7, p. 128).

4. Also worthy of teachers' consideration and attention are reading-age scores, even though they seem to be unreliable as predictions of auding ability. Apparently, many pupils of low reading ability learn to "compensate" for this deficiency by developing, probably without conscious intent, great powers of retention and comprehension when the material is presented orally (5, p. 310). Caffrey also makes these observations:

1. When auding ability is low, reading ability tends more often to be low.
2. When auding ability is high, reading ability is not predictable.
3. When reading ability is low, auding ability is not predictable.
4. When reading ability is high, auding ability is to a very small extent predictable, likely to be high.

If we keep in mind these data about the processes involved in the development of reading and listening reception, comprehension, and vocabulary, and if we make provision for diagnosis and remedy, for individual differences, and for vocabulary development, we should be helping more readers to listen better and more listeners to read better.

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For Girls Only

Oh dear, the naughty boys are always after my two pigtails. Wish to God I had two eyes at the back.

I don't know why they tease us so. They laugh when we cuddle a doll. How silly not to know that we will become mummies tomorrow. Who then shall take care of our babies if we don't learn about it now?

These naughty fellows will become bad men. They will go away to the office. We shall have to do all the work for them. At night they will go to the club and enjoy while we wait.

That is why I say I will not marry. I shall become the president of the U.N.O. like Vijayalakshmi and we girls shall get together and push the boys into the sea.

Rani, 10 years old, Izatnagar

From *Shankar's Weekly*,

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New Delhi, India.

An In-Service Approach to the Improvement of Developmental Reading Instruction

The complexity and breadth of the reading skill and the importance of sound reading instruction are discussed here as background to show the need for constant study and review of techniques by all teachers of reading. An attempt is made to show what noted authorities in the field have found concerning difficulties in reading, as well as to point out some of the more obvious conditions that contribute to reading disability. The importance of the teacher and type of reading program are also related to the difficulties of reading mastery and the complexity of the skill. These basic elements of the teaching of reading should serve as a basis upon which to build a program designated to stimulate the in-service growth of teachers in this vital area. One major premise of this article is that any in-service program must be very pointed, practical, and implemented through a motivating technique. It is for that reason that the suggested program contains a wealth of audio-visual aids.

Difficulty of the Reading Process

The average elementary child, working at his own speed and capabilities, is undergoing and mastering the extremely complex reading process, a truly remarkable accomplishment when the possibilities of failure are enumerated. Weaknesses in areas such as environment, physical growth, emotional stability and basic intelligence, coupled with the basic skills of reading, set up rather large barriers for any child. In addition, a whole host of strange and difficult concepts are met, including consonants, vowels, syllables, prefixes, not to mention the

digraphs, diphthongs, homographs and exceptions.

Authorities have long decried the failure of a great number of pupils to learn to read, as evidenced by the large amount of literature in the field. As long as seventeen years ago, Stratton (8) lamented that the "amount and quality of the reading done by children and adults in general are disappointingly low." Betts (1) writes that "teachers everywhere are confronted with the problems of pupils who are retarded in reading." He finds that from "8 to 15 per cent of the school population is characterized by varying degrees of reading disabilities." Why do we have all these failures in reading? Apparently not the lack of basic ability in children. Durrell (3) found "retarded readers among normal and superior children more frequently than among dull children." At the same time, he produces evidence that "about 80 per cent of those pupils who were retarded in reading had either normal or superior intelligence." Regardless of these facts, however, the truth remains that, in spite of good physical conditions and sufficient mental age, many children are not learning to read with acceptable skill and efficiency.

Reading, undoubtedly, is not a general ability; rather, it is a complex of skills, habits, attitudes and knowledge. It is an integration of complex processes. Gray's classic definition of reading (7) presents reading as including recognition and comprehension *and* interpretation and application.

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Importance of a Sound Foundation for Reading Instruction

When one considers reading in light of this complexity, and considers the implications for each individual child, an obvious conclusion can be drawn that the teacher who is responsible for success of the reading program has a large, formidable task. Not only must he have thoroughly mastered and understood the reading process, but he must be prepared to interpret this process to each and every pupil, attempting to adapt the process to each individual's own capabilities and achievements.

The role of the teacher in reading has received considerable emphasis in the writings of the field. In discussing the procedures for teaching the basic skills of reading, Durrell (4) lists twelve practices which the successful teacher must have mastered. These include such items as familiarity with individual differences, specific objectives, plans for observation, knowledge of available books, attention to vocabulary growth, insight into silent reading and others equally important. A similar list of problems confronting the reading teacher is listed by Carter and McGinnis (2). They list nineteen such problems, emphasizing the enormity of the task if an efficient job is to be done.

That teachers do not always master these techniques, thereby increasing greatly the complexity of reading to the child, is given attention by Gates (6) as one of the many causes why pupils fail to grasp the significance of reading. Fernald (5) also emphasizes that "many children fail to learn because the methods used by the schools actually prevent them from doing so.

This vitalness of the teacher's skill to the proper development of reading concepts, by the child, is ample reason for concern as to the type and quality of preparation and continued impetus given to the teacher. In encouraging teachers to continue their study of this complex job, a matter of immediate concern involves how to best handle the continuation of basic understandings.

Fundamental Skills—

Major Areas of Concern

As discussed previously, reading is a complex process. It involves psychological operations such as perception, comprehension, interpretation, reasoning and integration. It necessitates an interaction between the reader—his purpose and physical, intellectual and emotional equipment, and what he has read—the readability and content of the book or article. The literature of the field reveals a rather definite area in which teachers of reading are encountering difficulty. This major area of concern has to do with the mastery of the fundamental skills. The elements of reading under this category include the (1) word power and perception skills, (2) word attack skills, (3) comprehension skills and (4) reading study skills. To review and clarify the processes and instructional techniques of these elements, each set of skills must be itemized and brought to attention.

The following discussion outline, with suggested references and enrichment materials for each set of skills, is designed to be utilized in in-service training programs concerned with reading skill development. It is assumed that the director of such a program would adapt the content to the needs and teaching levels of the participants. An introduction, covering overview background such as given in the preceding sections, would naturally be utilized for motivation and direction.

One feasible technique for implementing this program with a heterogeneous group (in terms of teaching level and background) would be to divide the group according to each individual's stated needs in the skill areas. This would provide the unusual opportunity of diagnostic improvement of teaching skill, rather than the usual general approach. With sufficient guidance, reference material and practical application under each skill area, individual teaching strength would be bolstered in terms of stated need.

Suggested In-Service Outline of Reading Skills**I. Building Word Power and Perception Skills****A. Developing the skills necessary to promote retention of an adequate sight vocabulary, with a knowledge of the usual approaches****1. Activities Which Encourage Learning**

- a. Conversation
- b. Visitations
- c. "Show and Tell"

2. Preparatory Materials

- a. Study of examples now in use

3. Commercial Pre-Primers

- a. Study of examples now in use
- b. Opaque projection of pre-primer pages to show typical types

4. Experience Charts

- a. Demonstration of construction and use

5. Display Materials

- a. Study of examples, such as labels, notices, labeled pictures, action cards and name tags

B. Developing a knowledge of a variety of techniques for developing the meaning vocabulary**1. Frequency Lists**

- a. Study of typical lists and word studies such as those by Dolch, Horn, Thorndike and Seegers
- b. Use of the lists to determine words needed by children and the readability of books
- c. Opaque projection of the vocabulary content from typical series to show how vocabulary is controlled

2. Study of Words in Contextual Settings

- a. Use of filmstrip "Improve Your Vocabulary" (Young America) to give examples of word meaning skills and to summarize information

3. Use of Discussion and Reports to Develop Word Meanings**4. Use of Basal Texts as Material to Develop Concepts**

- a. Study of examples of current series, teachers' manuals and aids

C. Developing techniques for application of the needed vocabulary concepts such as:**1. Improvement of Meaning Vocabulary Through Experiences, Aids and Association Situations**

- a. Use of film "Reading With Suzy" (Churchill-Wexler) and the filmstrip "Words and Your Work" (Society for Visual Education to illustrate typical techniques and situations

2. Increased awareness of the various uses of words, their finer meanings and special applications

- a. Use of the filmstrips "Words", Part I and III (Filmstrip House) to review the values of words and their origins

- D. Developing an awareness of the need for controlled vocabulary and a sequence of experiences

a. Use of the filmstrip "The Right Word in the Right Place" (Society for Visual Education) to summarize the use of words

- E. Selected References

1. Betts (1) pp 509-11
2. Bond (2) Ch 9
3. McKee (8) pp 204-34
4. Russell (9) Ch 9
5. Weber (12) General

II. Word Attack Skills

- A. Developing and reviewing skills necessary to use and explain the major instructional tools for word attack, including:

1. Verbal Context

- a. Use of oral selections to determine meanings
- b. Use of printed material containing words in association settings
- c. Use of different types of examples, showing words with clues before, after, etc.
- d. Use of various punctuation marks to show varied meanings
- e. Use of film "Spelling and Learning" (University of Southern California) to show typical classroom situation in which meaning clues are being used

2. Picture Clues

- a. Use of picture which shows meaning of word under study
- b. Use of filmstrip "Friendship Fables Series" (Eye Gate) to give examples of pictures which give meaning clues

3. Phonetic Analysis

- a. Use of single consonants in initial, final and medial positions
- b. Use of consonant blends
- c. Use of consonant digraphs in the different positions as found
- d. Use of the vowel sounds, both short and long
- e. Use of the vowel diphthongs
- f. Use of the vowel digraphs
- g. Use of the vowel sound principles
- h. Use of silent letters and homographs
- i. Use of the filmstrip "Goals in Spelling" (Popular Science) to summarize and review the concepts of phonics

4. Structural Analysis

- a. Use of prefixes and suffixes as added to familiar base words
- b. Use of compound words to discover meaning and pronunciation
- c. Use of the base words in derivatives and variants
- d. Use of the various syllabification principles
- e. Use of the display material "Basic Phonic Series," Sets IV and V (F. A. Owen) to review and summarize basic principles

5. Use of the Dictionary
 - a. Use of the alphabet for listing words
 - b. Use of the picture dictionary to aid meaning
 - c. Use of the dictionary for phonetic spelling and syllabication
 - d. Use of the accent mark
 - e. Use of the pronunciation key
 - f. Use of all meanings given, including variants
 - g. Use of the guide words
 - h. Use of the film "Look It Up!" (Coronet) to review concepts

B. Selected References

1. Dolch (3) Ch 12
2. Gray (6) General
3. Kantner (7) Phonics
4. Russell (9) Ch 10

III. Developing Comprehension Skills

A. Developing skill in extending the meaning vocabulary

1. Use of visual aids, experiences and concrete situations to stimulate use of new words
2. Use of acquired recognition skills to arrive at meanings of words
3. Use of the film "Story Acting is Fun" (Coronet) to illustrate how meaning can be extended

B. Developing technique in providing a purpose for reading

1. Use of the filmstrip "Improve Your Reading" (Young America) to show techniques for improving habits of comprehension
2. Use of the film "Story Telling" (Coronet) to show how interest leads to understanding
3. Discussion of teacher-pupil planning to set up purpose and extend individual reading
4. Use of problem exercises to review habits of consideration and attention

C. Developing background for teaching the use of aids which are vital to comprehension

1. Use of grammatical structure to gain understandings
 - a. Elements including punctuation, headings, sentences and paragraphs
2. Use of variant meanings that show author's intent
 - a. Practice with figures of speech, intended meanings, dramatic content and interpretation
3. Use of the filmstrip set "Pilot to Good English" (Popular Science) to review and summarize the needed concepts

D. Developing technique in utilizing basal readers and seatwork as an aid to comprehension instruction

1. Study of selections from current materials
2. Opaque projection of study guide exercises from typical teachers' manuals

E. Developing knowledge of the various types of comprehension which will be needed by the pupils

1. Opaque projection of materials illustrating the various types including:
 - a. Reading to get the main idea
 - b. Reading to note significant details
 - c. Reading to remember directions
 - d. Reading to predict what will happen
 - e. Reading to evaluate
 - f. Reading to summarize or reproduce
 - g. Reading for comparison
 - h. Reading for retention

F. Selected References

1. Gates (5) Ch 12
2. McKee (8) Ch 13 to 15
3. Tinker (11) Ch 10

IV. Reading Study Skills

A. Developing knowledge for giving training in the locating of information through such sources as:

1. Use of the various parts of a book
2. Use of specific library aids such as the card catalog, Reader's Guide, special indexes and Dewey Decimal System
3. Use of specialized sources such as the atlas, almanac, and various encyclopaediae
4. Use of the filmstrips "Library Tools" (Young America) to picture visually the skills listed above

B. Developing techniques for helping pupils evaluate material read

1. Use of various materials to show propaganda and unvalid types
2. Use of materials to show weighted comparison of opinion and fact
3. Use of cross-reference material to check facts
4. Use of the film "Getting the Facts" (Encyclopedia Britannica) to show a typical classroom use of evaluation techniques

C. Developing ability to establish organizational patterns and retention of ideas

1. Use of the paragraph as a basic pattern
2. Use of well organized sentence structure
3. Use of note taking to speed organization
4. Use of reports and summaries to make a record of information
5. Use of the filmstrip set "Learning to Study" (Jam Handy) to review and summarize the basic elements

D. Selected References

1. Bond (2) pp 212-34
2. Durrell (4) Ch 10
3. Stone (10) Ch 7

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9. Russell, David H., *Children Learn to Read*, Boston: Ginn and Company, 1949.
10. Stone, Clarence, *Better Advanced Reading*, St. Louis: Webster Publishing Company, 1937.
11. Tinker, Miles A., *Teaching Elementary Reading*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Company, 1952.
12. Weber, Christian O., *Reading and Vocabulary Development*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951.

Commercial Sources of Selected Visual Aids

1. Churchill-Wexler Film Productions
137 N. LaBrea Ave., Los Angeles 36, Cal.
2. Coronet Films
Coronet Building, Chicago 1, Ill.
3. Encyclopedia Britannica Films, Inc.
1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill.
4. Eye Gate House, Inc.
2716 41st Ave., Long Island City 1, N.Y.
5. F. A. Owen Publishing Company
Dansville, N. Y.
6. Filmstrip House
25 Broad Street, New York 4, N. Y.
7. Jam Handy Organization
2821 East Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich.
8. Popular Science Publishing Company, Audio-Visual Division
353 4th Ave., New York 10, N. Y.
9. Society For Visual Education, Inc.
1345 W. Diversey Pkwy., Chicago 14, Ill.
10. University of Southern California
Audio-Visual Services
Los Angeles 7, Calif.
11. Young America Films, Inc.
18 East 41st Street, New York 17, N. Y.

Jacob's Adventure

Jacko was a little monkey who lived at the zoo. One day, when the keeper was going to give him some bananas, Jacko managed to squeeze through between his legs and escape from the zoo. Quickly he went down the road. Soon he came to a school. There were some children in the playground. Then he went into the playground and what a fright he gave them.

When the bell started to ring, the children ran to their lines and Jacko ran too. He followed a little boy into his class room. When the little boy got to his seat, Jacko sprang on him. The little boy's name was James. Just then the teacher came in with a policeman. The policeman said, "Is there a monkey here?" The children all shouted, "Yes, here he is." And the policeman took him back to the zoo.

William McNeil, 6 years old, Scotland.

From *Shankar's Weekly*,
Children's Art Number, 1954-55,
New Delhi, India

Writing A Group Poem

The class had been reading and hearing about the Vikings or Norsemen as the earliest explorers. Our class sets of social studies Books, *The Story of Our Country* and *Stories of My Country's Beginnings*, were consulted. In addition we used *Our America*, *The Building of America*, and *Founders of Our United States*, from our class library. The class has seen the strip-film, *The Vikings*, and pictures of Viking ships. They had given short group-planned dramatizations of episodes from the lives of Eric the Red and Leif Ericson. In art they had drawn or painted Viking ships and had designed shields and mastheads. The Viking voyages were traced on a large map, and small maps were drawn showing the routes from Norway to Iceland, to Greenland, to Finland. In mathematics they had computed the approximate number of years between the explorations of the Vikings, Marco Polo, and Columbus. They had also discussed the reasons for lack of authentic dates, *i.e.*, no written or printed records. Instead they had "sagas."

I then asked the class for suggestions for an original assembly program. Because we had written a poem on the first day of the term and had been reading poems in choral recitation, the most popular suggestion was, "Let's write a poem and learn it as a choral recitation." A few themes were suggested, with "The Vikings" getting most approval.

We started by making an outline of the points to be covered and then proceeded to do two stanzas a day. Suggestions for whole lines or phrases or individual words came from nearly every child. Dictionaries were consulted, the meter clapped out, lines read, changed, and reread. The stanzas were copied into notebooks. A chart of the whole poem was made.

The children read each stanza and decided on the choral arrangement. There were solos, duets, trios, quartets, quintets, sextets, boys' group, girls' group, and all of the class. By this time, most of the class knew the whole poem by heart and the rehearsals were for the purposes of clarity, proper emphasis, cuing, and interpretation.

Ten school days after the conception of the idea, the poem was presented to the fifth and sixth year assembly. Later a tape recording was made for the school files.

Curriculum areas involved were history and geography, map study, spelling, reading, writing, dictionary practice, phonics, science and art.

Both the writing and presentation of the poem were very rewarding experiences to the children. They felt proud of the results and the compliments they received. Facts about the Vikings were firmly impressed on even the slowest learner in the class.

Miss Lachman is a teacher in P.S. 33, New York City.

The Prediction of Reading Success and Reading-readiness Tests

The use of reading-readiness tests to predict probable growth in reading has achieved wide acceptance in our schools throughout the nation. It is common practice to administer these tests either at the end of the kindergarten or beginning of the first year of elementary school. The scores which these tests yield are used as a basis for placing children into classes or grouping them within the classes. Frequently, those children who obtain high scores on these tests are deemed ready to profit from formal reading instruction. Others, whose scores are low, are considered too immature to undertake beginning reading.

The confidence which teachers place in the concept of reading-readiness is well-merited, but the desirability of using existing reading-readiness tests almost exclusively to measure *extent* of readiness should be re-examined.

In an investigation of physical growth and reading success¹ the writer obtained data which do not support the use of these tests for determining probable success or failure in first-grade reading. A phase of the study which is related to this problem will be reviewed here.

Sample

The sample in this investigation con-

Dr. Karlin is an assistant professor in the College of Education at New York University.

¹Robert Karlin, *Physical Growth and Success in Undertaking Beginning Reading*. Doctoral dissertation, School of Education, New York University, 1955. pp. V-135.

sisted of one hundred and eleven first-grade children who attended one of four public elementary schools in Rockville Centre, New York, and who met the following criteria of normality:

1. An I. Q. of ninety or higher;
2. Normal near- and far-point vision;
3. A hearing loss of not more than ten decibels;
4. Freedom from any serious speech defect, immaturity of speech, or foreign language influences;
5. Attendance in kindergarten;
6. Social and emotional maturity.

These criteria were chosen on the basis of research which has shown that the presence or lack of them is likely to influence success in learning to read.²

Procedure in collecting data

The Metropolitan Readiness Test, (Reading Section), Form R, was administered to the first-grade children in September, 1954, before any attempt was made by the schools to initiate reading instruction. The first three parts of this test measure understanding or comprehension of language and background of information; while the fourth measures visual perception involving the recognition of similarities.

The scores which the children in the sample obtained corresponded to the number of correct items. A maximum score of

²Nila B. Smith, "Readiness for Reading." National Conference on Research in English, *Research Bulletin*, 1950. pp. 3-33.

sixty-six was possible; the distribution of scores is shown in Table I.

The Gates Primary Reading Test, Type 3. Paragraph Reading, was administered to the same children at the end of May, 1955.

This test measures ability to read thought units with full and exact understanding of the whole. To get only a word or phrase here and there, or to get a whole sentence or two is insufficient. The pupil must grasp clearly and exactly the total thought if he is to execute the directions successfully. Type 3, then, measures within the limits of a carefully selected vocabulary, the pupil's ability to do independent reading of a rigorous sort.³

TABLE I

The Distribution of the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test Scores Obtained by 111 Pupils in the First Grade of Four Rockville Centre Public Elementary Schools, 1954-1955

Scores	Frequency	Per Cent
65-66	2	1.80
63-64	5	4.50
61-62	11	9.91
59-60	16	14.41
57-58	23	20.72
55-56	14	12.62
53-54	7	6.31
51-52	10	9.00
49-50	5	4.50
47-48	8	7.21
45-46	6	5.41
43-44	2	1.80
41-42	1	0.90
39-40	1	0.90
Totals	111	99.99
Means	55.27	
σ	5.59	

The distribution of the raw scores obtained on this test appears in Table II.

TABLE II

The Distribution of the Gates Primary Reading Test Scores, Type 3. Paragraph Reading, Form 1, Obtained by 111 Pupils in the First Grade of Four Rockville Centre Public Elementary Schools, 1954-1955

Scores	Frequency	Per Cent
25-26	10	9.00
23-24	10	9.00
21-22	19	17.12
19-20	28	25.23
17-18	13	11.72
15-16	12	10.81
13-14	9	8.11
11-12	2	1.80
9-10	2	1.80
7- 8	3	2.70
5- 6	1	0.90
3- 4	1	0.90
1- 2	1	0.90
Totals	111	99.99
Means	18.97	
σ	5.31	

Treatment of data and their results

In order to determine the extent to which scores on the readiness and reading achievement tests are related the Pearson product-moment co-efficient is used, and the standard error of the coefficient is obtained. The coefficient of correlation equals .36, and its standard error is .08. This r is significant at the one per cent level.

When the influences of chronological age and intelligence upon the test scores are removed, the r drops to .25, and the standard error remains the same. This co-efficient of correlation barely meets the criterion for the one per cent level of confidence. The most one can conclude from the size of these r 's is that the relationship between the reading-readiness test scores and the reading achievement test scores is small.

³J. P. Guilford, *Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education* (second ed.), New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1950. p. 7.

There are other tests, however, by which an r should be judged. One is the coefficient of alienation⁴ which indicates the degree of lack of relationship between the variables. In the latter instance, the coefficient of alienation equals .96. When the prediction of a reading achievement test score is attempted, *chance* will account for ninety-six per cent (96%) of the findings. A second test is the index of forecasting efficiency⁵ which equals four per cent (4%). Prediction of a reading achievement test score from a reading-readiness test score is but four per cent (4%) better than one made without the knowledge of the latter. Obviously, predictions based upon these reading-readiness test scores are impossible.

Conclusions

The sample in this investigation consisted of one hundred and eleven first-grade children who attended four public elementary schools in Rockville Centre, New York, during the school year, 1954-1955. Reading-readiness and reading

achievement tests were administered to the children in September and May, respectively, of the school year.

An analysis of the data reveals a very small relationship between the scores these children obtained on the reading-readiness test and the reading achievement test. It is virtually impossible to predict from the reading-readiness test score how well any child in the sample will do on the reading test.

The findings of this study clearly indicate the need for better understanding of what present reading-readiness tests measure. Certainly for this sample these tests fail to predict probable outcomes. It is appropriate to extend this generalization to the population from which the sample was drawn and to like populations. Additional research may produce readiness tests which are more useful than existing ones for purposes of prediction. This weakness does not preclude the use, however, of these tests for diagnosis of possible difficulties in language and visual perception.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that there is a need for developing valid instruments which schools can use to evaluate the readiness levels that have been achieved by their pupils.

⁴G. H. Hildreth and N. L. Griffiths, *Metropolitan Readiness Test*, Yonkers: World Book Co., 1948. p. 408.

⁵*Ibid*, p. 410.

The Circus

Elephants dancing,
Horses prancing,
The crowd is shouting, "Hooray!"
I wonder how much,
I wonder how much,
How much does the fat lady weigh?

Sharon Perr

Holmes School
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Frances S. Nesta,
Teacher

Visual Immaturity and Reading Difficulty

"Reading is a visual skill of the highest order. The eyes of a child are not mature enough to cope with the printed page before he is eight." This statement was made before the 1956 Oklahoma Optometric Association Convention by Dr. Louis Jaques, Sr.¹

Dr. Jaques' views do not stand unsupported. A number of investigators believe that many six and seven year old children are not visually ready for reading. In referring to a child's eyes Cole has said:

If his eyes are developing at a perfectly normal rate, at the age of six they are still too farsighted to see clearly so small an object as a word. It is not until a normal child is eight years old that one can be certain his eyes are mature.²

In a similar vein the ophthalmologist Berner stated that if all children entering the first grade were given tests for visual acuity, "it would be found that the majority of them do not have full 6/6 vision."³ He went on to say that most of these same children would show normal vision by the beginning of the second grade. This leads to the obvious conclusion that maturation is solely responsible.

In a visual study of 225 Chicago school children (grades 1-8) Park and Burri reported the following:

... It was found that a great many of the first-graders had vision below 20/20 even though they had little refractive error, and that many had poor fusion and little stereopsis. The problem is apparently one of maturational retardation or low achievement in the development of good binocular vision, and not attributable to visual defects.

In order to discover whether this poor

binocular function in the pre-reading and beginning reading groups was consistently greater than among the older children, an analysis of the frequency of the various eye factors was made and compared with those in the older group. It was found that there were consistently more students with poor vision, with little or no fusion or stereopsis, and poor diction among the younger children than in the other age groups.⁴

In connection with the foregoing study, Park and Burri point out that near point visual problems were more frequent than those at far point.

Nugent and Ilg⁵ carried on a detailed visual study of 160 subjects whom they divided into four age groups—five to seven years, seven to nine years, ten to fourteen years, and college women. Their data showed that a larger number of children in the five to six age category suffered from poor fusion, stereopsis, and slow recovery to a single image after a break-in-duction test. These defects were particularly noticeable at near point.

The Dangers of Visual Immaturity

The child whose visual acuity or binocular vision at near point is immature to the degree that he sees fuzzy, blurred, and indistinct letters becomes the victim of an unfortunate frustration. For a while he may keep trying to read, not realizing that his classmates see the printed page clearly. But ocular discomfort, accompanied by blurring of the pages, soon leads him to believe that learning to read isn't possible.

Dr. Schubert is an Associate Professor of Education and director of the reading clinic at Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Sciences.

The effects of this conviction may persevere long after the cause has disappeared. Very often the visually immature child develops a that's-too-hard-for-me attitude which stays with him and proves inimical to future progress in reading. By the time he is ready to read (a year or two may be involved) he is reconciled to failure.

How to Handle the Problem

The first step in solving the visual immaturity problem involves proper identification of visually immature children. Many schools fail to check vision in the first grade. Those that do, often fail to employ a test that will detect the kinds of visual immaturity that prove most detrimental to learning how to read.

If near-point activity is required of first grade children, a screening test that checks visual efficiency at near point should be employed. A suitable test of this kind should include measurements of near-point acuity, stereopsis, and fusion. Three instruments which employ stereoscopic slides for testing are available and will do the job. These are the Orthorater,¹ Keystone Visual Survey Tests,² and the Sight Screener.³ These tests measure far-point vision as well as vision at near-point.

The widely used Snellen-type vision test has many short-comings when used for spotting children whose eyes are immature. Since the Snellen is monocular it fails to detect astereopsis, poor fusion, and muscular imbalance. In addition, it does not test the eyes at reading distance; and this is where research indicates that visual im-

maturity most often manifests itself. In the final analysis, the only visual defect the Snellen type test detects is nearsightedness. Ironically, nearsightedness is the only visual anomaly that is associated with *good* rather than poor reading ability.

Some of the more progressive school districts have enlisted the cooperation of visual specialists in their communities. Through a special arrangement, these specialists provide complete and competent visual screening tests for all children. Programs such as these are successful and have paid tremendous dividends to the school systems employing them.

When children are found to be visually immature rather than defective in their near-point visual skills, the school can circumvent much of the difficulty by requiring only far-point reading activities of these children. Such a plan would employ charts, projections, and blackboard demonstration. Primers and readers would be minimized or not used at all. While the child's eyes are maturing he moves ahead in his reading skills so that later, when he is ready, reading from books is taken in stride.

Apropos here is the tremendous success of the New Castle, Pennsylvania, system of teaching reading in the first grade.⁴ The New Castle approach minimized near-point reading and used filmstrips intensively. All first graders (even some with low I.Q.'s) learned how to read and achieved unprecedented reading scores on standardized tests at the end of the year.

Another solution to the problem of visual immaturity is to omit reading from the programs of the children demonstrating this shortcoming. Although some children have the feeling of being excluded

¹Bausch and Lomb Optical Co., 730 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

²Keystone View Co., Meadville, Pennsylvania.

³American Optical Company, Southbridge, Massachusetts.

from reading and suffer emotionally when this is done, it is more desirable than forcing them into near-point activity before they are ready.

Orthoptics should not be overlooked when considering the problem under discussion. It is true that orthoptic training is futile in many cases of visual immaturity since one cannot develop something which doesn't exist anatomically. But some children involved have the needed anatomical equipment. What they lack is visual experience. The British ophthalmologist, Mann, makes this point in connection with convergence deficiency. He states:

Among children, therefore, the condition of convergence deficiency seems to be part of a delayed use of cerebral pathways which are anatomically present, certainly after the sixth year. Exercises develop the child's awareness of the use he can make of his eyes and the control once gained is apparently stable. It is doubtful whether exercises development occurs after seven or eight.⁷

Although it is well known that practice lags behind research by a decade or more in many areas, it is unfortunate that innocent children have to suffer. It is time that elementary schools realize the extreme

importance of visual maturity and the role it plays in initial reading experience. It is time that they employ the proper near-point tests or seek the cooperation of visual specialists who can do a competent job of detecting visually immature children for them. And, finally, it is time that elementary schools make necessary provisions for children who they know are visually immature.

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6. McCracken, G., "New Castle Reading Experiment," *Elementary English*, 30, (1953), 13-21.
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Look, look at me!
I'm swinging high
Up in the world.

Judy Butterwood, Grade 1

(Overheard on the playground)
San Diego City Schools

Pioneers in Reading, I: William Scott Gray

Dr. William Scott Gray, professor emeritus of education at the University of Chicago, and active director of research in reading at that institution, was born at Coatsburg, Illinois, June 5, 1885, a son of William Scott and Anna Letitia Gilliland Gray. Beginning in 1904 as a teacher in the rural schools of Adams County, Illinois, he successively held positions as a teaching principal at Fowler, Illinois, and as a faculty member and principal of the training school at Illinois State Normal. He graduated from Illinois State Normal School in 1910, and later received a bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago, 1913, a master's degree from Columbia, 1914, and a Ph. D. from the University of Chicago, 1916. Beginning as an assistant in the department of education at Chicago in 1915, he became dean of education in 1917 and served in that capacity for 15 years. He later served as the executive secretary of the university's committee on the preparation of teachers. He retired in 1950, but as emeritus professor of education he was designated director of research in reading and has continued to serve actively in this role.

As a pioneer in reading, Gray's stature has increased with his years, and even in "retirement" his contributions have been monumental. From the date of his first publication in 1909 until his retirement in 1950, his writings in the various fields of his interests numbered 407

titles. Writing at the time of Dr. Gray's retirement, Dr. Arthur E. Traxler, one of Gray's former students, commented on the fact that this great educational leader had actually published nearly half of his writings in the fifteen years preceding his retirement. To Traxler's observation that Dr. Gray had produced on the average of a publication a month during his professional career from 1909 to 1950, there may be added the fact that since 1950, 86 additional publications

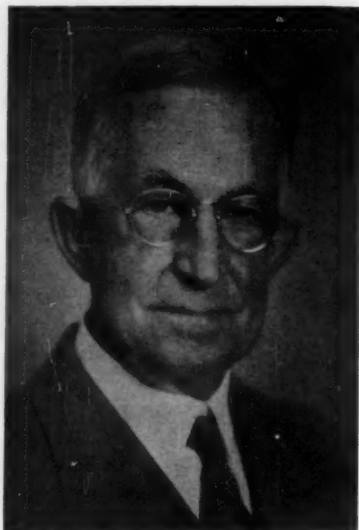
have appeared over Gray's name. As he approaches his seventy-second birthday, Dr. Gray has to his credit the tremendous total of 493 publications.

Were Professor Gray's stature to be measured only by the magnitude of his written contributions, he would stand forth as the most influential figure in the field of reading, for examination of the titles in his bibliography reveals the tremendous breadth of his interests.

He has been a vigorous

proponent of the importance of a clear grasp of meaning in reading, the need for a carefully coordinated reading program throughout the grades and high school, and the urgent need for greatly raising the literacy level of children and adults. A keen analyst, a tremendous capacity for discerning implications to be drawn from research, a penetrating, inquisitive

Dr. Moore is Associate Professor of Education at the University of Illinois.



William Scott Gray

interest in practical as well as theoretical considerations, a drive to push promising leads, and a vitality for the energetic pursuit of knowledge, all combine to furnish Gray with the characteristics which identify him first and foremost as a teacher.

His students everywhere, and they number in the thousands, attest to his scholarly attributes and to his qualities as a sharer of knowledge. His rigorous, painstaking, and exacting guidance of his students has resulted in their attainment of positions of prominence and leadership in the field of reading in this country and abroad. His interest in, and sympathy for, and concern over the problems of classroom teachers have led to an unending stream of inquiries and requests for assistance from practitioners the world over. His assistance has been solicited and received by boards, commissions, organizations, state, regional, national and international agencies concerned with problems related to reading. The path that has led from the rural school and community to the offices and ministries of education in this country and in many countries of the world has not been accomplished without steadfast adherence to the fundamental belief in the importance of the teacher's role, and throughout his half-century of endeavor in the educational world, Professor Gray has been a teacher in the highest sense of the word.

The preeminence that he has gained as a research worker and as a disseminator and interpreter of research findings fittingly complements Gray's role as a teacher and writer. Dr. Gray's first published contribution was dated 1909, and was an oration entitled "Society and the Delinquent." This he used in a series of oratorical contests in which he came out first in the inter-society meet within the Illinois State Normal School, the inter-normal schools meet in Illinois, and in the inter-state finals involving contestants from five mid-western states. In 1911 and 1912, a series of twelve articles appeared in *School Century*. These were

devoted to the study of geography and were written when he was a staff member and principal of the training school at Illinois State Normal School. From these early publications began the steady flow of articles, books, book reviews, yearbooks and yearbook chapters, contributions to the proceedings of learned societies, articles and annotated bibliographies explaining and evaluating reading research both in this country and abroad, and contributions emanating from reading conferences. To this accumulation were added tests designed to diagnose reading difficulties and appraise the effectiveness of reading methods. The original and sustained interest in problems relating to reading was augmented by scores of contributions in such areas as measurement, teacher education, higher education, and methods of instruction.

Professor Gray's doctoral dissertation, *Studies of Elementary School Reading Through Standardized Tests*, published in 1917 as the first number in the Supplementary Educational Monographs Series, was his first scientific investigation. Over the years, nineteen volumes in this outstanding series were to bear his name as writer, compiler, and editor. Gray's *Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading*, appearing in the Supplementary Educational Monographs series in 1925, was the starting point for a unique and extremely valuable service to research workers and individuals interested in the periodical literature devoted to reading. Gray's "Summaries" in reading followed this original compilation in the form of yearly contributions appearing for seven years in the *Elementary School Journal*, and for an additional twenty-five years, from 1932 to the present in the *Journal of Educational Research*. Beginning in 1933 and continuing through 1955, Gray contributed annotations of non-technical articles from the periodical literature to the *Elementary School Journal*. Nine numbers of the *Review of Educational Research* in the years from 1931 to 1940 carried lengthy research summaries. His views on reading ap-

peared in the 1941 and 1949 editions of the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, and Dr. Gray is presently preparing his articles for inclusion in the 1959 revision of the *Encyclopedia*.

Dr. Gray pioneered in the establishment of educational conferences which yearly drew hundreds of teachers, research workers, and administrative officers to the University of Chicago. For twelve years following 1925 he organized, directed, and edited the proceedings of the annual conference of Administrative Officers for Higher Educational institutions. Beginning in 1939 and continuing through 1952, Gray served as writer, editor, and compiler for the proceedings of the annual summer reading conferences. These yearly conferences soon supplied clear evidence of the worth-whileness of bringing together specialists and practitioners from the classroom, and served as an inspiration and model for reading conferences which sprung up on university and college campuses from coast to coast during the decade of the 1940's.

Since his retirement, Dr. Gray has been engaged in the study of reading on a world-wide scale. This has been made possible by an invitation from UNESCO to make a survey and evaluation of methods used in teaching both children and adults throughout the world. His

recent publications, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, the UNESCO report, and his *Maturity in Reading: Its Nature and Appraisal*, and typical of his latest research interests. Listed below are several of Gray's contributions which are deemed representative of his work over the years.

(With Gertrude Whipple). *Improving Instruction in Reading: An Experimental Study*. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 40. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933. Pp. xiv 226.

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On Their Own in Reading. Chicago: Scott Foresman and Company, 1948. Pp. 268.

The Teaching of Reading and Writing. Chicago: Scott, Foresman—UNESCO, 1956. Pp. 281.

(With Bernice Rogers). *Maturity in Reading: Its Nature and Appraisal*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956.

Without popular education no government which rests on popular action can long endure.

—Woodrow Wilson

National Council of Teachers of English

CONVENTION IMPRESSIONS ON TEXANS

One teacher says, "I found the 1956 Convention of NCTE exceedingly stimulating. As I listened to the challenging discussions on guiding children in their use of the language arts, I wished keenly that every elementary school in Texas had found it possible to send at least one member of their faculty to share in the offerings of the Convention." Another says, "The one thing that impressed me most about the NCTE Convention was the democratic fusion of kindred souls. The publishers, the scholars, and the voices of authority appeared genuinely and actively interested in the professional problems of this fourth grade teacher."

"Although I made the trip on my own, it was well worth the money that I spent. The talks and panels were very informative, and I gained many ideas which I can use in writing my units for our English Course of Study. (Snyder High School)" "I was impressed by the enormity of the convention and the friendliness of the people. Professionally the results cannot be measured yet, but I was happy to be able to meet people of whom I'd heard and read." "To me the NCTE was a wonderful experience; I gained both inspiration and practical ideas." "This was by far the most inspiring convention I ever attended and it certainly was an incentive to strive to be a better teacher."

"Meeting and talking with the English teachers from the different sections of the country was a wonderful experience. The addresses and talks will certainly help me to be a better English teacher" "My professional and personal horizons have been widened by the NCTE meeting. The fellowship with colleagues

and the inspiration of addresses by eminent speakers and thinkers are a stimulating experience that will surely enrich my service as a teacher of young people." And another: "In any discussion of values or ideas, there is plenty of room for personal preferences and for differences of opinion. In this convention I found a oneness of thought we English teachers need to emphasize reading, writing, and reporting (or exchanging) of thoughts and ideas gained in literature." "The NCTE meeting gave me an opportunity to evaluate my own work in the light of what is being done elsewhere. It provided also a needed stimulation and ideas for enrichment of my presentation to my classes."

TEXANS IN ST. LOUIS

Years ago, many years ago, when I was in high school my English teacher was also my Camp Fire guardian. Under her careful guidance I passed through all the ranks upward to attain at last that of Torch Bearer. In the inspiring ceremony I held a candle which my guardian lighted with her own taper as I echoed her words, "That light which has been given to me I desire to pass undimmed to others."

Through the decades that have followed, that vow has never grown dim. I can yet see the face of that great teacher who *willed* into my very being the desire to keep alive the flame of service to others.

And then last March when I was elected president of the English teachers of the Oil Belt District of Texas, I knew that again I must make partial payment to the memory of that vow. How? I could think of no other way than through the National Council of Teachers of English for it was in Los Angeles

three years ago that I again touched my candle not to a lighted taper but to a flaming torch of enthusiasm and inspiration in my professional world.

If one thing impressed me more than any other in that, my first NCTE convention, it was the democratic fusion of kindred souls. I met Dr. Charles Carpenter Fries, Dr. Robert Pooley, Dr. Wilbur Hatfield, Dr. Mildred Dawson—those who had until then been only unknown authors of treasured books. There they became real people who delighted me with their friendliness and graciousness.

Also at the convention were the book stalls, veritable forests with magic fruit. I bought all that I could carry home—and that my bank account would allow.

Doris Gates spoke at the Books-for-Children Luncheon, and the birth of *The Blue Willow* was dramatically reviewed before my very eyes. I rubbed elbows, literally, with scores of authors and illustrators.

And my candle burned brighter.

Even before I was formally elected as president I suggested that the out-going president make inquiry among our thousands of Oil Belt language arts teachers about their schools' sending representatives to the NCTE Convention. So far as information could be obtained not one teacher had ever had her expenses paid to the convention. Few had even dared to suggest such a revolutionary innovation. It was simply unheard of. In the memory of the members questioned there had been only three teachers of the 110 schools and six colleges and universities in our district who had attended the convention and that at their own expense. (In fact there were only thirty-seven members of the Council in the whole district.)

My first task as the newly elected president was to write a three-page form letter to all of the administrators in the district explaining the Council, its work and its advantages, and ask-

ing each one to consider sending two classroom teachers to St. Louis. I asked for \$60.00 each to pay coach fare and hotel expenses.

First there came an answer from Dr. J. W. McFarland, superintendent of the Vernon Public Schools, saying that he would send two—not by coach but by pullman! Actually he sent not 2 but 5! Then came two more answers from administrators saying they would consider my proposal.

Then the curtain of darkness fell, and there were no more answers.

But my candle did not grow dim.

Dr. McFarland is generally acknowledged to be the most professionally minded school man in our district. His name gave me the ammunition, and I fired it straight into each school in the area. First, my own superintendent succumbed by granting two of us \$100.00 each for expenses. Then others began toying with the white flag. All of this time the teachers in the various schools were doggedly chipping away. They had acquired between forty and fifty new members to the Council and had excited interest among themselves in the St. Louis Pilgrimage. Driving five or six hundred miles I had attended at my own expense every meeting of language arts teachers in the district.

Today we of the Oil Belt District are here in St. Louis—twenty-three strong representing eleven schools and three colleges and universities. That light which has been given to me I have given to others, and I am persuaded that they had fed their flames by the torch here in St. Louis.

And that light which has been given to them they will pass undimmed to others.

"Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?"

Mrs. Carrie Stegall, President
of the Oil Belt District English
Teachers of Texas

Windows on the World

The Popular Arts in the Classroom

Edited by PATRICK D. HAZARD



Patrick D. Hazard

Rock 'n' Roll and Quiet Classrooms

Elvis may be giving English teachers a particularly hard time at the moment because of the title of his first movie, "Love Me Tender." Adverbs and adjectives aside, however, what Presley and his uninhibited hips are doing to the sensibilities of children immersed in this swamp of bilge is directly connected with our responsibilities. The fan magazines cheapen and publicize the private lives of movie stars and ball players; in a complementary way, the long-playing exhibitionism of Elvis and his vulgar friends encourages an entire generation to cheapen and publicize their own private emotions. There are undoubtedly many reasons for this cultural cancer. But one reason, the only one over which we have considerable control, is that the classroom has not become a place where children can examine the kind of choices the tastemakers of mass culture hold out to them. The Presley hysteria is the inevitable result of callow and crude disc jockies usurping the leadership that the teacher and parent should have been exercising.

One way that teachers and parents can begin to reassert their initiative is for them to let children discuss what is good and appealing, as well as what is bad and appalling, in the heritage of popular music in America and other lands. Earlier in this department, we suggested how important Folkways was as a source of materials in this area. In the month of May, commercial TV will offer teachers two fine opportunities to give students perspective on popular music. Mickey Rooney will star in "The George M. Cohan Story", Saturday, May 11th over NBC-TV, 9:00 to 10:30 p.m., E. S. T. The musical will be based on the career of the performer once described as

"the man who owns Broadway"; Cohan songs will constitute the score. For the upper grades, teachers ought to consider Duke Ellington's premiere of his work on the history of jazz, "A Drum is a Woman," to be telecast over "The U. S. Steel Hour," May 8th, 10:00 to 11:00 p.m., E. S. T., CBS-TV. To make it possible for teachers to use either of these programs to initiate units on the history of American popular music, Clara J. Kircher, principal librarian, Children's Division, Public Library of Newark, N. J., has prepared the following book list on behalf of the Women's National Book Committee. If we insist on having quiet, unmusical classrooms, then we can't really complain about the rock 'n' roll brainwashing that prevails outside our little isolated backwaters.

Popular Music in America

The following list of books is for the use of the elementary school teacher and for the junior and senior high school student. Some, however, are easy enough to be used by a pupil in the higher elementary grades if he has a real interest in music. A few out-of-print titles were included for books that are apt to be available in public and school libraries.

Clara J. Kircher, Principal Librarian
Children's Division
Public Library of Newark, N. J.

The History of Popular American Music

The First Book of Jazz by Langston Hughes. Watts, 1954. \$1.95.

An easy introduction to jazz: what it is and who are its leading exponents.

Mr. Hazard is Assistant Professor of English at Trenton State Teachers College, Trenton, New Jersey.

Great Bands of America by Albert Powell Graham. Nelson, 1951. \$2.00.

The history of military, concert and municipal bands, with biographical accounts of great band leaders.

A History of Popular Music in America by Sigmund Gottfried Spaeth. Random, 1948. \$5.00.

The origins of American songs with something about composers and lyricists and the musical structure of the pieces.

Men and Melodies by Leonard A. Paris. Crowell, 1954. \$2.75.

Sixteen composers and librettists from Reginald DeKoven to Oscar Hammerstein II. A history of musical comedy in America.

Men of Popular Music by David Ewen. Ziff-Davis, 1944. o.p.

The history of American popular music from ragtime to boogie-woogie, and the men whose names are mileposts along the way.

A Pictorial History of Jazz by Orrin Keepnews and Bill Grauer. Crown, 1955. \$5.95.

A graphic survey of the 'greats' and near-greats in the development of jazz in America. Each of the 21 sections has a full page introduction describing the historical and geographical data associated with and era or movement.

Story-lives of American Composers by Katherine Little Bakeless. Lippincott, 1953. \$3.50.

A popular history of American music from the time of the red man to that of Aaron Copland.

The Story of Jazz by Rex Hartis. Grosset, 1955. \$.95.

A concise, tightly-packed history of jazz from the folk song structures of Africa through the 1950's. Has excellent section on discography.

Composers, Librettists, and Artists

Call Me Lucky by Bing Crosby as told to Pete Martin. Simon, 1953. \$3.50 (Pocket Books \$.35).

"Der Bingle" tells of his career and family life and of the many people who have contributed toward his "luck".

Chariot in the Sky: The Story of the Jubilee Singers by Arna Bontemps. Winston, 1951. \$2.75.

The story of a singing tour of the country made by a group of Fisk University students in 1871 to secure funds to keep their school in operation.

Deep in My Heart: A Story Based on the Life of Sigmund Romberg by Elliott Arnold. Duell, 1949. o.p.

All aspects of Romberg's life from his boyhood in Hungary to his American career as composer, conductor, radio star and concert performer.

Famous Negro Music Makers by Langston Hughes. Dodd, 1955. \$3.00.

Interesting thumbnail sketches of some twenty Negro vocalists, instrumentalists and composers.

George M. Cohan: Prince of the American Theater by Ward Morehouse. Lippincott, 1943. o.p.

Interesting sidelight and anecdotes about "the greatest little guy in the world." Written with enthusiasm by a friend and admirer.

He Heard America Sing: The Story of Stephen Foster by Claire Lee Purdy. Messner, 1940. \$2.95.

Biography of the man whose songs express the spirit of America in the years preceding the Civil War. For the younger reader.

John Philip Sousa by Ann M. Lingg. Holt, 1954. \$3.00.

Life-story of the March King, the greatest band leader and composer of march music that this country has known.

Singing Family of the Cumberlands by Jean Ritchie. Oxford, 1955. \$4.00.

Story of a mountain family to whom the singing of the Elizabethan ballads brought to Kentucky by the early pioneers is as necessary as speaking.

Some Enchanted Evenings: The Story of Rodgers and Hammerstein by Deems Taylor. Harper, 1953. \$3.95 o.p.

Intimate portrait of a team that developed the musical play as a form of entertainment that is uniquely American. Covers the period from the production of *Rose Marie* in 1924 to the epochal *Oklahoma* and *South Pacific*.

The Story of George Gershwin by David Ewen. Holt, 1943. \$3.00.

Based upon the author's personal acquaintance with the composer. Contains lists of musical comedies and films for which Gershwin wrote music.

The Story of Irving Berlin by David Ewen. Holt, 1950. \$3.00.

How an ambitious boy rose out of his slum environment to become the composer of some of America's most popular songs.

The Story of Jerome Kern by David Ewen. Holt, 1953. \$2.50.

Behind the scenes view of Tin Pan Alley when Jerome Kern was the outstanding song writer of the day.

Trumpeter's Tale: The Story of Young Louis Armstrong by Jeanette Eaton. Morrow, 1955. \$3.00.

How "Satchmo" rose from the sordid environment of Perdido Street, to become a top jazz trumpeter.

Victor Herbert: American Music Master by Claire Lee Purdy. Messner, 1944. \$2.95.

Story of the man who brought new life to the American comic opera. Includes selections from his music and a complete list of his works.

"Making" Music

America Sings: Stories and Songs of Our Country's Growing collected and told by Carl Carmer. Knopf, 1942. \$5.75.

The stories and songs which Americans have been making up and singing at their work and play for three hundred years.

American Ballads and Folk Songs collected and compiled by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax. Macmillan, 1943. \$8.00.

A large and varied collection chosen as the best examples of various types. Arranged under subject groupings such as Negro Spirituals, White Spirituals, The Shanty-Boy, Working on the Railroad, etc.

The Burl Ives Songbook: American Song in Historical Perspective. Houghton, 1953. \$5.00.

"115 songs from the repertoire of Burl Ives, presented just as he sings them, with the complete words and music."

Cowboy Jamboree: Western Songs and Lore by Harold W. Felton. Knopf, 1951. \$3.00.

Familiar and less well-known cowboy songs with piano and guitar accompaniment. Each song is prefaced by an explanatory comment.

Cowboy Songs, and Other Frontier Ballads collected by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax. Macmillan, 1943. \$7.50.

Revised edition of a standard work originally published in 1910. Contains the melody and text for over 200 songs that the cowboys "made up" themselves or that were the popular airs of the time.

The Real Book about Easy Music-Making by Joseph Leeming. Garden City, 1952. \$1.50.

The ABC's of easy music-making from the ukulele to the comb kazoo. For anyone interested in making music for fun.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster with a foreword by Deems Taylor. Grosset, 1947. \$2.49.

Music and words for 50 of Foster's most popular songs with historical notes by John T. Howard. A fine collection either as a song book or as an example of the closest approach we have to an indigenous folk song heritage.

A Treasury of the Blues edited by W. C. Handy. Simon, 1949. o.p.

"Complete words and music of 67 great songs from *Memphis Blues* to the present day. Has an historical and critical text by Abbe Niles.

Work and Sing: A Collection of the Songs That Built America selected and arranged by Elie Siegmeister. Scott, 1946. o.p.

Includes Songs of the Sea, Songs of the West, Songs of Railroads and River Boats, Songs of the Country, and Songs of the City.

Humor for Humorless Homes

Books can bring humor into humorless homes, and the teacher of English has a rare opportunity to help in this respect. During the bleak days of the Depression I knew a 10-year old boy who was forced to live with his young married sister, unwanted by the young brother-in-law. The boys' only joy was the hours he spent in the schoolroom, and when he was sick and alone all day, his life was lonesome and miserable. One day when he was sick I took him a copy of "The Scarecrow of Oz," and when he returned it, he said with enthusiasm, "That's the best book I ever read in my whole life." When I see children in a crowd with sad, listless eyes, I want to give all of them the Oz books to see their eyes shine as his did. A doctor, I'm sure, would prescribe a dose of humor to make them well.

Louise Hovde Mortensen

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹



William A. Jenkins

Children's programs on ETV

Children's educational television programs are described in a booklet, *Children Turn to Educational Television*, available from the Educational Television and Radio Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Here are some of the programs currently available on the N.E.T. network:

Magic Doorways. Pre-schoolers and an imaginary Mr. A. J. Corruthers are told delightful stories with some simple lesson of human conduct keyed to their understanding. The storyteller is Betty Girling.

Friendly Giant. Youngsters 3-8 years are treated to bright little adventures told by Bob Homme of the University of Wisconsin School of Music. Most of the adventures take place in his doll house castle. (WHA-TV Madison, Wis.)

Mr. Murgle's Musee. Mr. Murgle is a museum-exploring puppet, and these programs consist of his conversations with a less sophisticated wooden friend, Elfin. In the 26 programs Mr. Murgle includes "The Cuckoo Clock," featuring the Chamberlain clock collection, and "Mysteries of the Past," about the Stone Age. (WKAR-TV, Michigan State University.)

Buckskin Bob. Buckskin Bob and his sister Annie explore the past with a time machine—a history book. They are created by a history teacher turned cartoonist, Les Landin, with a few deft strokes of his drawing pencil. In the 39 programs they visit New York City in 1664, Miles Standish, and Dolly Madison. (KQED, San Francisco.)

Tempest in a Test Tube. Dr. Harry Sello attempts to answer such questions as, "What

is a flame?" "How does a candle work?" "What is air made of?" The subjects in the 26 programs were chosen by the Northern California Chapter of the American Chemical Society. (KQED, San Francisco.)

World We Want. Teenagers from 33 corners of the world speak their minds in this discussion program produced by the New York *Herald Tribune*. They take up such subjects as "Is There an Alternative to War?" and "Do American Teenagers Have Too Much Freedom?"

Discovery. "How" is the key word in this series in which school-age boys and girls, led by Mary Lela Grimes, learn how to have fun exploring the outdoors. Mrs. Grimes tells how animals are adapted to live in their specific environments, how plants, animals and man are related to one another, and how Nature adapts her creatures to meet changes in their environment. (WGBH-TV, Boston.)

Music for Young People. Musicians such as the Juilliard String Quartet, the New York Woodwind Quintet, and Yehudi Menuhin discuss their art with nine and ten-year olds who visit the studio and perform for them.

The following programs have been shown prior to 1957 and will be scheduled for re-use occasionally. They can be ordered as kinescopes for your station from the N.E.T. Center at Ann Arbor, or as 16 mm. films for classroom use by ordering them from the N.E.T. Film Service, Audio-Visual Center, University of Indiana, Bloomington.

¹University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

Children's Corner. A half hour of fun with such things as puppets, songs, riddles, stories, learning French phrases, collecting autumn leaves, and drawing pictures, all led by Josie Carey. The 52-program series, produced by WQED, Pittsburgh, won the 1955 Sylvania Television Award for the best local children's show in the country. It receives 3,000 letters a week.

The Finder. In his 52 30-minute programs, Steve Bloomer takes his viewers behind the scenes into a naval air base, a newspaper office, a circus, a supermarket, a Mississippi tugboat, and so on. (KETC, St. Louis.)

Almanac. Charles W. Schwartz, a wild life photographer, captures the drama and occasional humor of animal life. One program, in which viewers watched the complete life cycle of the quail, "The Bob White Quail," won an international film award. (KETC, St. Louis.)

New York Times Youth Forum. Teenagers are joined by prominent adults for discussion of serious and timely public questions. On one of the 57 programs, "Delinquent Youth States Its Case," four ex-juvenile delinquents, silhouetted against a screen to protect their identities, discussed such questions as "Why do youngsters get into trouble?" "How can parents and teachers help them avert this tragedy?"

ETV news

Educational television continues to grow. Twenty-four stations are now in operation and seven others will soon begin broadcasting, according to the annual report of the Joint Council on Educational Television filed with the Federal Communications Commission. This number was an increase of eight over last year's stations. In addition, forty communities are actively interested in building stations. With the completion of the seven new stations under construction, educational television outlets will be reaching a potential audience of some 60

million.

In the past four years more than \$50 million has been spent by public and private interests to finance studies and help build stations. These contributions include \$5 million from state legislatures; \$7 million from public institutions of higher learning; \$3 million from local boards of education and municipal governments; \$5 million from commercial broadcasters; some \$7 million from private institutions, individuals and business concerns, other than broadcasters; and more than \$25 million from foundations.

JCET points out that in communities where such stations now exist they compare favorably with ratings of commercial stations. One survey showed, according to JCET, that in Pittsburgh 71% of TV set owners who can receive local ETV outlet WQED watch its programs regularly. With completion of the seven new stations, educational television outlets will be reaching a potential audience of some 60 million.

NBC Television Project

The NBC Television Project which got under way on March 11 suggests the extent and direction to which commercial and educational television can cooperate. Last month we criticized NBC-TV for dropping "Ding Dong School"; this month we hail the network for sponsoring this project, for taking a step in one right direction. We can't help feeling, however, that since audience size is one of the main concerns in all sponsored programs, and since children's programs which are designed specifically for them will by their very nature have limited audiences, that this move does not meet head-on the problem which concerns so many educators: will the networks provide and improve programs designed just for children, rather than offering them the residues, the trifles, and the innocuous drivel that filters through to them from adult, general-masses programs? In fairness we say, however, that by providing five half-hour programs a

week on an educational plane, for adults, on a national scale, the network is exercising part of its public service function for the high schools and colleges and the adults of the nation.

At this writing twenty-five schools have joined this cooperative means of bringing professional programming on a weekday basis, Monday through Friday, to their audiences. Most stations are carrying the programs "live," others are using them for delayed, kinescope presentations. Some of the country's best teachers and scholars are appearing on these programs, and because of the variety of topics covered every person should find something of value and interest to his particular field.

Monday nights' programs are on literature, subtitled *The American Scene*. The series looks at certain aspects of American life and culture which have been made significant in the works of contemporary authors. Each program is built around a particular work by a contemporary author, who is invited to appear on the program. Professional performers read or enact portions of the work under discussion.

Tuesday nights' programs are devoted to the subject of geography—overall title, *World Geography*.

Wednesday nights' programs are devoted to the subject of mathematics. It should prove one of the most rewarding of the adult education series.

Thursday nights' programs deal with the subject of *American Government: Pursuit of Happiness*. Institutions of the federal government are the focus of interest in this series, with the purpose of showing how these institutions operate, why they function as they do, and how their mode of operations and their relationships are constantly evolving.

Friday nights' programs are devoted to music and the first 13-week series to highlights of opera history. The history of opera from 1600-1950 is the basis of this series. The programs utilize the resources and personnel of the NBC Opera Company. Half of each period

is devoted to piano and small groups of singers from the company.

These stations are carrying the programs "live":

WGBH Cambridge, Mass.
 WAIQ Andalusia, Ala.
 WBIQ Birmingham, Ala.
 WTIQ Munford, Ala.
 WTHS-TV Miami, Fla.
 WUNC-TV Chapel Hill, N. C.
 WTVS-TV Detroit, Mich.
 WKAR-TV E. Lansing, Mich.
 KTCA St. Paul, Minn.
 KETC St. Louis, Mo.
 KUON-TV Lincoln, Nebr.
 WCET Cincinnati, O.
 WOSU-TV Columbus, O.
 KETA Norman, Okla.
 WKNO-TV Memphis, Tenn.
 KUTH Houston, Tex.
 WYES New Orleans, La.
 WHA-TV Madison, Wis.
 WQED Pittsburgh, Pa.
 WTTW Chicago, Ill.

These stations are presenting kinescopes of the programs:

WHYY Philadelphia, Pa.
 WILL-TV Urbana, Ill.
 KQED San Francisco, Cal.
 KRMA-TV Denver, Colo.
 KCTS Seattle, Wash.

Complete programs are listed in *NBC Program Information*. If you are not already receiving this publication and wish to be put on the mailing list, write for your free copy to NBC Program Information, Room 780-H, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20. In writing, it is helpful to NBC if you mention your occupation.

Newbery and Caldecott Awards

This year's Newbery Medal went to Virginia Sorenson for her *Miracles on Maple Hill*, illustrated by Beth and Joe Krush (Harcourt, Brace). The Caldecott Award went to Marc Simont for his illustrations of *A Tree Is Nice* by Janice Udry (Harper). The winners were announced on March 4.

Runnersup for the Newbery Medal were

Old Yeller by Fred Gipson (Harper); *House of Sixty Fathers* by Meindert de Jong (Harper); *Mr. Justice Holmes* by Clara Ingram Judson (Follett); *The Corn Grows Ripe* by Dorothy Rhoads (Viking); and *Black Fox of Lorne* by Marguerite de Angeli (Doubleday).

Runnersup for the Caldecott Medal were *Mr. Penny's Race Horse* by Marie Hall Ets (Viking); *I is One* by Tasha Tudor (Oxford); *Anatole*, illustrated by Paul Galdone, written by Eve Titus (Whittlesey House); *Gillespie and the Guards*, illustrated by James Daugherty, written by Benjamin Elkin (Viking); and *Lion* by William Pene DuBois (Viking).

Children's Book Club

The May selection of the Weekly Reader Children's Book Club is *Danny Dunn and the Anti-Gravity Paint* by Jay Williams and Raymond Abrashkin (Whittlesey House). (Write to Education Center, Columbus 16, Ohio).

From the Council-Gram

For elementary teachers, a portfolio of fourteen four-page leaflets entitled *Creative Ways in Teaching the Language Arts* rolled from the presses in April. Consisting of articles selected by a special Elementary Section Committee, with Mirian Wilt of Philadelphia as chairman, the portfolio presents many ideas for the simultaneous enrichment and enlivening of elementary teaching. The portfolio will be similar in format to the one prepared two years ago for secondary teachers, *They Will Read Literature*. Each sells at \$1.

* * *

The 1957 NCTE catalog, when it becomes available late in the summer, will list several dozen items new since 1956. Included will be a considerable number of new literary recordings produced commercially and made available to NCTE members at reduced prices. A considerable number of filmstrips, including eleven prepared by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, will be listed.

* * *

Every state gained in NCTE members and subscribers from March 1, 1956, to March 1, 1957, the annual compilation made in the NCTE office reveals.

The total number of members and subscribers as of March 1 was 38,842, a gain of 6,721 in the past year. The greatest growth was in the Conference on College Composition and Communication, which for several years had a circulating figure of only four or five hundred. Its total now is 1,644, a gain of 67% over a year ago. The circulation of *Elementary English* climbed to 12,227, a gain of 31%. *The English Journal* for March was mailed to 19,655 addresses, up 15%. *College English* went to 5,316, also an increase of 15%.

Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia

Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia. 15 volumes. Chicago: F. E. Compton and Company, 1957 edition. Prices: Depending upon binding, \$104.50 to \$139.50. School, library, and professional discounts.

Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia, 1957 edition, is 7500 pages of fascinating, informative material for child, teacher, and parent. Easily read, interesting articles, more than adequately supplemented with charts, graphs, drawings and pictures, catch the eye and stimulate the mind. Versatility, readability, and accessibility are its features. Yet it meets the esoteric prerequisites of the language arts teacher.

A study of its contents revealed adequate treatment of writing, children's books, letter writing, libraries (27pp.) language and forms of literature, literary awards, bibliography, books, spelling, storytelling (including folk tales, 22pp.), newspapers, magazines, novels, American literature, poetry, reading, magazines, motion pictures (28pp.), intelligence, and education. The teacher himself would enjoy these articles. The alert child would gain considerable knowledge.

Beyond language arts, elementary teachers—any adult, as a matter of fact—would find the 50 pages on painting excellent by any

standards. Schools of painting, representatives of the schools, art history, and 68 color reproductions of masterpieces were found here. Equally commendable is the material on the states. About 20 pages is devoted to each state. For example, subdivisions on Wisconsin include a survey of the state; a section on its geography; its people, agriculture, educational system, manufacturing, resources and conservation, and places of interest. Finally, there is a "Fact Summary" with maps, statistics on population size, and so on. Just as thorough is the treatment of most countries. Russia is discussed in 41 pages of revised text and relatively new photographs. Phases of science and mathematics were handled as competently and completely.

The ultimate consumer, the child, will find his varied and changing interests fully satisfied, no matter what his demands. The mechanically minded child can read and study jets, aviation, railroads, and model airplanes. The historical mind can study World Wars I and II (29 and 58pp.), find numerous pictures of events and actions, and see in color insignia of all U. S. units taking part. The list is endless: Christmas around the world; fire and police departments; flags of all nations and states in color (28pp.); pets and how to care for them; football; Indians (45pp.); and hobbies. The latter subject, like many, includes an extensive bibliography.

And just to satisfy ourselves that *Compton's* is really a home and school encyclopedia, we quickly thumbed through to see what was offered to parents. We found "Toys and How to Choose Them Wisely," "Seven Stories High—the Child's Own Library" (available as a free pamphlet), "How to Help Children Grow Up," "Psychology—the Science of Behavior," and "Maturity—the Test of Personality." It indeed is a home and school encyclopedia.

Compton's has a program of continuous rebuilding and revision to insure that articles are authentic and up-to-date. The 1957 edition

has 182 new articles, and 788 which were rewritten; 415 articles underwent major revisions and 1,895 minor revisions were made; 6,637 new photographs were added, 2,580 in color and 4,057 in black and white. The new edition was expanded 976 pages, 802 added to the text and 174 to the index. New maps total 702. We have no figures on cutaways added, but they were plentiful.

Accessibility of information and readability are *Compton's* forte. Evidently no special format or style of writing is prescribed for contributors. Their articles, therefore, are a variety which adds interest. All articles we read were lucid and cogent.

Each volume begins with "Here and There," a sample listing of its contents; a list of about 100 "Interest-questions answered in this volume"; and a key to pronunciation. Articles are printed on a pigmented, non-glare paper and include duotone, full color, or black and white photographs. Many articles have one-purpose maps and a number have bibliographies, some very extensive. Each volume concludes with an "Easy Reference Fact-Index."

The Fact-Index is a guide to all subjects in the volume and a cross reference to other volumes, plus a quick reference to thousands of other subjects. The cross referencing is in addition to cross references found in the text. The editors have most perceptibly anticipated the user's needs.

Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia for 1957 is a splendid work. It seems virtually an indispensable classroom tool, along with a dictionary, and it should be a basic item in a child's home library. Teachers could do well to put it on their recommended list and write for the free 48-page guide, "Compton's in the Classroom" for their own use (1000 North Dearborn Street, Chicago 10).

Reading conference

Second annual conference of the International Reading Association will be held May 10 and 11 at the Hotel New Yorker, New

York City. The theme will be "Reading in Action." Inquiries should be addressed to Dr. Albert J. Harris, Queens College, Flushing 67, N. Y.

Boys' Clubs of America Awards

The Boys' Clubs of America were founded 51 years ago. Eleven years ago the organization decided to give impetus to its program of encouraging boys to read by setting up a Junior Book Award program. Boys read books in the program and gave their opinions of the books and indicated those they liked best.

The books chosen by the boys do not necessarily represent what the adult critic would call good literature, or outstanding art, or even startling revelations in science. But as the organization so clearly states its case, "... these were the books which had given them the most reading pleasure, from which they had learned something and felt something. Since the greater number of these boys are reluctant readers, the first happy experience with a book is of great importance. Once a boy has had a truly satisfying reading experience, he wants to repeat it." For these reasons, we are listing here the books the boys liked best.

Five hundred different titles were submitted for the 1955-56 reading program. Of these the 3,800 boys in Boys' Clubs who actively participated in the Junior Book Awards reading program recommended 14 titles as the most popular. The adult Awards Committee selected five to receive Junior Book Award Medals; the remaining nine books received Certificates of Award. Medal awards went to: *Eddie and His Big Deals* by Carolyn Haywood (Morrow).

Great Discoverers in Modern Science by Patrick Pringle (Roy).

Switch on the Night by Ray Bradbury (Pantheon).

Wheels, A Pictorial History by Edwin Tunis (World).

Wings Against the Wind by Natalie Savage Carlson (Harper).

Certificate awards went to:

Adventures in Science by B. C. Brooks (Roy).

Billy's Clubhouse by Marion Holland (Knopf).

Born to Play Ball—Willie Mays by Charles Einstein (Putnam).

Lanterns Aloft by Mary Evans Andrews (Longmans).

The Planet Mappers by E. Everett Evans (Dodd, Mead).

Playing Possum by Edward Eager (Putnam).

Tecumseh, Shawnee Boy by Augusta Stevenson (Bobbs Merrill).

To the Shores of Tripoli by Berta N. Briggs (Winston).

Wilderness Pioneer by Stephen F. Austin (Follett).

Some helpful materials

Literature for Children, reprinted from the 1957 edition of the *American Educator Encyclopedia*. Contains a brief but good discussion of the field, with an extensive bibliography of outstanding books for children prepared by Virginia Haviland, readers' advisor for children at the Boston Public Library. Single copies may be obtained by writing to Mrs. Victoria S. Johnson, Director of Educational Research and Services, The United Educators, Inc., Lake Bluff, Illinois.

Also available free from the same source is *Storytelling*, reprinted from the 1956 edition and prepared by Sara Innis Fenwick, University of Chicago.

Handwriting Made Easy, prepared by members of the staff of the Handwriting Research Institute, New York: Noble and Noble, \$2.50. This text-workbook is essentially a teacher's manual and refresher course in manuscript, transition, and cursive writing. Discusses size, sequence, and direction of each stroke; alignment, spacing, connectives, and slant.

Improving Reading in the Junior High School by L. Jane Stewart, Frieda M. Heller, and Elsie J. Alberty, all of the Ohio State University School. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., \$.95. 67pp.

A study and report on what can be accomplished by a librarian and a core teacher working together to improve eighth grade pupils' reading. Among other things, the median scores of the pupils were raised from a grade equivalent of 8.2 to 11.3 in one year's work. Reading interests were broadened also, although the grade range for the class was almost as great at the end of the year. The method described could be a useful experiment for many other situations.

Weather: A Guide to Phenomena and Forecasts by Paul E. Lehr, R. Will Burnett, and Herbert S. Zim. A Golden Nature Guide. New York: Simon and Schuster, \$1.95.

Readable study of air masses, clouds, rainfall, storms, weather maps, climate, and forecasting, made more readable by a wealth of charts and diagrams in color.

* * *

Playmaking with Children by Winifred Ward, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. \$3.50.

With emphasis on the creative, this volume places strong faith in children's ability to achieve, given freedom and guidance.

Out of her experiences at the Northwestern University School of Speech, Miss Ward draws and clearly presents ideas for the classroom teacher, the recreation leader. In them she places the greatest responsibility for the success of the playmaking experiences, for their feeling determines the child's attitude. Around their sensitivity, integrity, and taste revolves the experience. Play materials and situations in adequate number are discussed, so that the reader has practical proof of what playmaking can do for children and the degree of success that can be expected.

* * *

Supervision as Co-operative Action by

Muriel Crosby. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. \$3.50.

"Co-operative action" is defined here as including teacher, child, parent, principle, supervisor, superintendent, and the community. Leadership is a function which shifts as conditions require, now to one person or group, now to another. A spirit of cooperation permits this flexibility. Therein lies the strength of the book and its weakness.

Its weakness centers about its taking into account too many aspects of public education. But when one considers that the supervisor is involved in activities just as numerous as those explored here, the criticism pales. The thesis then becomes more valid, a strength, for no one person can do all of these things and do them well. Good supervision must be co-operative action. Miss Crosby helps the reader clear his thinking as to how this action can take place.

Junior Literary Guild

Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for May, and for the period through the summer, June-September:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old:

Madeline and the Bad Hat, written and illustrated by Ludwig Bemelmans. Viking Press, \$3.50.

The Happy Lion Roars by Louise Fatio. Whittlesey House, \$2.

Amazing Mr. Pelgrew by Miriam Schlein. Abelard-Schuman, \$2.50.

The Unhappy Hippopotamus by Nancy Moore. Vanguard Press, \$2.50.

The Cow Who Fell in the Canal by Phyllis Krasilovsky. Doubleday, \$2.75.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old:

The Indians Knew by Tillie S. Pine. Whittlesey House, \$2.

The Favorite Place by Irmengarde Eberle. Franklin Watts, \$2.50.

Bianco and the New World, written and illustrated by Tony Palazzo. Viking, \$2.75.

The True Book of Pioneers by Mabel Harmer.

Childrens Press, \$2.

Coral Island, written and illustrated by Nicholas. Doubleday, \$2.75.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old:

The Uninvited Donkey by Anne H. White. Viking, \$2.75.

That Jud! by Elspeth Bragdon. Viking, \$2.50.

Flying Roundup by Genevieve Torrey Eames.

Julian Messner, \$2.95.

Call of the White Fox by Willis Lindquist. Whittlesey, \$2.50.

The Garden Under the Sea by George Selden. Viking, \$2.75.

For girls 12 to 16 years old:

This Dear-Bought Land by Jean Lee Latham. Harper, \$2.75.

Gypsy Secret by Florence Crane. Random House, \$2.95.

Popular Girl by Lynn Bronson. Doubleday, \$2.75.

Undecided Heart by Nancy Faulkner. Doubleday, \$2.75.

Girls, Girls, Girls, selected by Helen Ferris. Franklin Watts, \$3.

For boys 12 to 16 years old:

Peacetime Uses of Atomic Energy by Martin Mann. Studio Publications, \$4.50.

Wildlife Cameraman by Jim Kjelgaard. Holiday House, \$2.75.

Joe Sunpool by Don Wilcox. Little, Brown, \$2.75.

S O S at Midnight by Walker A. Tompkins. Macrae Smith, \$2.75.

The Stubborn Mare by Jo Sykes. John C. Winston, \$2.95.

Carnival of Books

These are the "Carnival of Books" programs scheduled May through August. Dates given are

for broadcasts on WMAQ, Chicago. Check the local station in your area for day and time of broadcast.

May 4 *The Animals' Conference* by Jella Lepman (McKay).

May 11 *The Home Ranch* by Ralph Moody (Norton).

May 18 *Tony of the Ghost Towns* by Marie Halun Bloch (Coward-McCann).

May 25 *The Lone Hunt* by William O. Steele (Harcourt).

June 1 *Time for the Stars* by Robert A. Heinlein (Scribner).

June 8 *Mr. Justice Holmes* by Clara Ingram Judson (Follett).

June 15 *Stars for Cristy* by Mabel Leigh Hunt (Lippincott).

June 22 *Family Sabbatical* by Carol Rylie Brink (Viking).

June 29 *Curious George and Find the Constellations* by H. A. Rey (Houghton Mifflin).

July 6 *Out of the Wilderness* by Virginia S. Eifert (Dodd, Mead).

July 13 *Niko—Sculptor's Apprentice* by Isabelle Lawrence (Viking).

July 20 *Blow Bugles Blow* by Merritt Parmelee Allen (Longmans Green).

July 27 *Lincoln and Douglas: the Years of Decision* by Regina Kelly (Random House).

August 3 *Bronzeville Boys and Girls* by Gwendolyn Brooks (Harper).

August 10 *Gillespie and the Guards* by Benjamin Elkin (Viking).

August 17 *Dolly Madison* by Jane Mayer (Random House).

August 24 *Birthdays of Freedom, Part II: from the fall of Rome to 1776*, by Genevieve Foster (Scribners).

August 31 *The Wicked Enchantment* by Margot Benary-Isbert (Harcourt).



May Hill Arbuthnot

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Edited by MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

Mrs. Arbuthnot is well-known as a writer and lecturer in the field of children's literature. She is the author of CHILDREN AND BOOKS (Scott, Foresman, 1947) and three anthologies, combined in the single volume, THE ARBUTHNOT ANTHOLOGY (Scott, Foresman, 1953).

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and a member of the committee for ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1956).

This spring Mrs. Arbuthnot is taking a well-earned vacation. During this period Miss HARRIET G. LONG, Professor of Library Science at Western Reserve University, has kindly consented to write the reviews of the general children's books. Mrs. Arbuthnot will return to our pages in the fall.

Hill Farm. By Hildreth T. Wriston. Ill. by Peter Burchard, Abingdon, 1956. \$2.50. (10-12).

Dave, whose father owns a dairy farm in New England, is inclined to envy his friend Jay who lives in the neighboring town. For Dave must help with the chores, while Jay has all the time in the world to play, and plenty of pocket money besides. But Dave really likes farm life and learns to appreciate its values.

He also learns to assume responsibility, so that when the dam breaks and the flood waters sweep into the valley, he rescues a neighboring family and cares for the farm animals while his parents are marooned at the home of his grandfather.

This is a story of good family relationships, especially between Dave and his father. It is also an exciting account of the two boys' adventures, going fishing, tracking a lost cow, spending a night in the woods, as well as the excitement of the flood itself.

L

Lulu Herself. By Elizabeth Hubbard Lansing. Ill. by Grace Paull. Crowell, 1956. \$2.50. (10-13).

Any twelve year old girl who has moved to a new community, and has faced the problem of adjustment to new friends and a new school, will find some of their experiences reflected in this book. In addition, Lulu is a minister's daughter, a



Harriet G. Long



Margaret Mary Clark

situation which brings special problems of its own, at least Lulu thinks so. And the move from a much smaller city to the bigness of New York, where she attends a private school for the first time, complicate matters considerably.

In her efforts to be "one of the crowd" she loses her sense of values. But one sturdy friend and the wise guidance of her parents bring her back to being the kind of person she most wants to be.

This is not an outstanding book but one that will please girls because it gives significance to their own experiences.

L

Welcome Santza. By Constance Savery. Ill. by Helen Torrey. Longmans, 1956. \$2.75. (10-12).

The fate of children in the war-torn country of Greece is the theme of this well-written story. A deserted monastery is used for an orphanage, and here are gathered a group of boys and girls whose parents were either killed in the fighting, or their whereabouts is unknown.

To this poverty-stricken place come relief workers to tell them that the war is over, and to bring them food and clothing. In some cases the relief workers have been able to trace relatives to care for a few of the children. Santza, a shortened version of Chrysantza, had been made big sister to three young children who, it was discovered, have relatives in Eng-



Welcome Santza

land. In the confusion of departure the relief workers mistakenly send Santza with them, believing she belongs to the family.

The adaptation of the children to their new home in England, and to their aunt and uncle is movingly depicted. Santza's uncertainty as to her future is happily solved when the real parents of the three children are located in a prison camp, and Santza is adopted by Uncle Ted and Aunt Sheila, whom she had grown to love.

This is a warm-hearted story of a happy outcome to what is the fate of many children in the world today, whose lives have been disrupted by war and violence.

L

Rolling Show. By Virginia Frances Voight. Ill. by Kurt Wiese. Holiday, 1956. \$2.50. (10-12).



Rolling Show

What boy or girl can resist a circus story, particularly so when, as in this one, a boy of thirteen is featured on the circus poster as "The Youngest Wild Animal Trainer of All Times!"

Now that the traveling tent circus is likely to be a treasured memory, this story has some historical value. Furthermore, it describes the small circus which, in the last century, travelled the country in wagons, from one small town to another.

The Hathaway Rolling Show wintered its lions in a barn rented from Clay's father. When Clay showed some ability to work with the lions he was taken along one summer as a

cage boy. Rivalry with another circus on the same route provides excitement. When the Hathaway Rolling Show adds a zebra to attract customers, it is promptly stolen by the rival circus. But Clay, who was in charge of this then rare animal, brings it back with the help of Rosie, the elephant.

A lively tale, sure to please the young reader, even though to an adult Clay's participation in events is somewhat overdrawn.

L

The Impractical Chimney-Sweep. By Rosemary Anne Sisson. Ill. by Fritz Wegner. Watts, 1956. \$2.75. (9-11).

Here is a book with literary style and an enchantment of its own. It is an English story with that mixture of reality, fantasy and whimsy in which English authors excel.

In the days when there were chimney-sweeps in England, John William was the impractical son and helper of a very practical father, who travelled about in a donkey cart "with all his brushes stuck up above him like furry chimneys." One morning when they set out to clean the many chimneys at the home of Lord Somerset, John William, whose job it was to climb up the chimney and loosen the soot, saw as he looked up "a patch of dark



Impractical Chimney Sweep

blue sky and, right in the middle of it, the brightest silver star you ever saw." So up he climbed and there he stayed, with his elbows on the chimney top, gazing at the blue sky, the pink glow of the morning sun, and the deer and rabbits knibbling at the green grass. For, as his gypsy mother had always told him, there are more things in life than money and work.

His father tells him that after this he will use Tom Stubbs as helper, a good, practical boy. So John William decides to go off by himself and prove that he can earn money as a sweep.

In his own impractical way he becomes successful enough to have his own donkey cart and to find a gypsy bride as well. As he journeys through Sussex he meets some of the most interesting people to be found in a children's book this season, for this author has a gift for characterization.

An excellent read-aloud book.

L

A Carpet of Flowers. By Elizabeth Borton de Trevino. Ill. by Alan A. Crane, Crowell, 1956. \$2.50. (9-11).

The Mexican village of Huamantla makes the flower carpet each year for the great basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. This book gives a well-described picture of an annual devotion, but it is also a modern miracle story about Chema, a blind orphan boy who comes to the village of Huamantla where Don Nacho, a friend of his grandfather's, gives him shelter. The boy grows to love Don Nacho and his wife and prays to belong to them. When his prayer is answered he promises to offer something special to the Virgin.

Don Nacho has charge of making the design for the flower carpet, and Chema suggests that it picture the children's May procession, and begs that he may bring two flowers, pansies for the eyes of the Virgin. At first Don Nacho refuses, for no child is permitted

to participate. But permission is finally granted if Chema keeps it a secret. He must also do without any help, and get to Mexico City on time so that the two blossoms may be put into place at the very last minute before the large doors are opened for all to see the carpet of flowers.

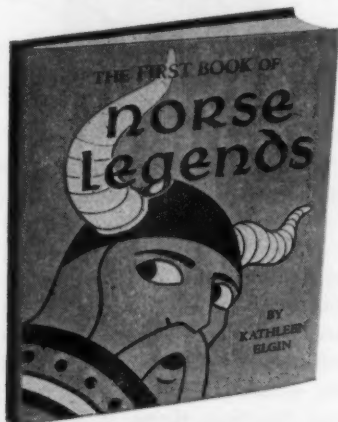
This Chema accomplishes, raising pansies from seed, and carefully protecting them during the long journey over the mountains to Mexico City. Mishaps occur and he fears that he will not reach the Cathedral in time. Just before the massive doors are opened he arrives and Don Nacho hurriedly puts the two pansies in place. After the doors are opened, and Chema is taking Communion, a miracle happens and his sight is restored.

The author has succeeded in telling this miracle story simply and without sentimentality.

L

The First Book of Norse Legends. Written and illustrated by Kathleen Elgin. Watts, 1956. \$1.95. (8-10).

Young readers respond to the simplicity and grandeur of myths. Although not as well known as the Greek, the Norse myths have an especial appeal to American children, for



they are colorful, exciting and vigorous.

In this retelling the author has shortened the stories by omitting description and inci-

dent. In so doing much of the atmosphere is lost, and many of the incidents which delight children have been deleted. For example in "How Thor Got His Hammer Back" children laugh with glee when huge Thor is dressed in Freya's garments to go to Giantland as a bride. They will miss the incident in this version.

Fortunately, the author has not sentimentalized the tales, and holds truthfully to the main thread of the plot. As a "first" book it may serve to introduce the Norse myths, but it would be unfortunate for children to miss Brown: *In the Days of the Giants*; Colum: *Children of Odin*; or Hosford: *Thunder of the Gods*.

L

The Hat-Shaking Dance and Other Tales from the Gold Coast. By Harold Courlander & Albert Kofi Prempeh. Ill. by Enrico Arno. Harcourt, 1956. \$2.95. (6-9).



The Hat Shaking Dance

Harold Courlander, the well-known folklorist who is bringing to children hitherto unknown folk tales from such places as Indonesia and Haiti, has gone to the African Gold Coast for this collection of twenty-one tales. He was helped in his research by Albert Kofi Prempeh, a native student.

All of these stories are about Anansi the spider who, like Reynard the Fox, or Brer Rabbit, outwits the other creatures, large and small. They reflect, as do folk tales in many lands, the triumph of the clever over the strong or stupid. As is true in many collections, one comes across tales that are familiar, re-

sulting from migration of peoples in the past, or may be due to the identity of human fancy—everywhere. For instance, "Anansi Plays Dead" is very similar to "The Tar Baby" in the Uncle Remus stories.

The title of the book comes from the story which explains why spiders have bald heads. Anansi, while mourning for his mother-in-law, promises not to partake of food for eight days. But on the fourth day he smells a pot of beans cooking over the fire. When no one was around he dipped up a large spoonful. Just then the other animals returned, and to hide the beans he poured them in his hat and put the hat on his head. When the hot beans began to burn he jiggled his hat around with his hand and claimed it was the hat-shaking dance native to his village. But the heat became too much to bear and he tore off his hat. When they saw the hot beans sticking to his head the animals laughed and jeered. And from that day to this all spiders have bald heads, for the hot beans burned off Anansi's hair.

The children of Africa's Gold Coast still gather in the villages at night to hear these stories, and they provide good tales to read aloud or tell to American children.

I

The Cunning Turtle. Written and illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Viking, 1956. \$2.00. (5-8).



The Cunning Turtle

It is always difficult to find enough humorous picture-story books, for young children like to laugh. This one, which tells how Mr. Turtle outwits Mr. Buzzard and gets to Cloudland where the winged musicians are holding a concert, is a good one in this respect. The illustration showing Mrs. Turtle serving tea to the reluctant Mr. Buzzard, while dozens of baby turtles crawl over his back, is hilarious.

While Mr. Buzzard is thus distracted, Mr. Turtle slips into his guitar and arrives in Cloudland to enjoy the concert, only to fall out on the return trip, and crack his shell on a big stone. Since then, whether you believe it or not, all turtles have cracks in their shells.

L

A Child's Book of Dreams. By Beatrice Schenk De Regniers. Ill. by Bill Sokol. Harcourt, 1957. \$2.25. (5-7).

What child doesn't like to dream, and therefore what delight he will find in reading about dreams he may have had, or others "never dreamed of."



A Child's Book of Dreams

With imagination and humor the author describes two favorite dreams, "The Flying Dream,"—you just wave your arms and let yourself fly like a bird—; and "the Ice Cream Dream,"—little pink hills, big chocolate mountains of ice cream sitting in little dishes, in big dishes. Always, of course, the child wakes up and knows that what he has dreamed about could never actually happen.

The author's previous books, such as *A Little House of Your Own*, were illustrated by Irene Haas. This one introduces a new artist whose line drawings, with an occasional use of the colors, red and green, are unusual in style, and have action and humor.

A read-aloud book.

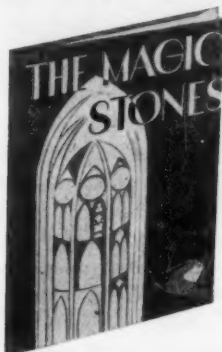
L

Social Studies

The Magic Stones: The Story of the Arch.

Written and illustrated by Alain. Whittlesey House, 1957. \$2.50. (4-6).

Here is a unique introduction to the story of medieval architecture. It begins with a legend of about the sixth century, when a little group of workers built a church only to have the roof collapse. They blamed a demon, Mon-



sieur Down, for jumping on their church and destroying it. But these imaginative early architects discovered the secret of building arches, a lost art of the earlier Romans, and from there on through the centuries, they advanced in building techniques from Romanesque to Gothic. The beautiful Cathedral of Notre Dame, now almost eight centuries old was the great masterpiece of all their knowledge and progress. Lively illustrations touched with reds and blues are as illuminating as the text, and will give children a real sense of man's slow persistent progress in building through ages when steel structures were unknown. This book is

a real addition to the study of the Middle Ages.

C

The Rainbow Book of Art. By Thomas Craven.

World Publishing Co. 1956. \$4.95. (12 and up).

From the days of the cavemen to Frank Lloyd Wright, the author has written an excellent history of art, which should have both use and appeal for younger readers as well as adults. Written in popular style, the material on Egyptian, Roman and Greek art, and the art of the Middle Ages would enrich the social studies of those early periods when art was such a vital part of the life and times. In his general treatment of the subject, which does not include the Oriental art, the author analyzes trends, includes brief critical biographies of a great number of artists and longer sketches of men such as Michelangelo, Raphael, Rubens, Titian, and others whose contributions were particularly significant. The material is organized by period and country, and includes a chapter on America. While the first half of the book suggests greater use for the elementary grades, the latter part would be of equal interest to the teacher. It is prolifically illustrated with over thirty plates in full color and numerous half tones and drawings.

C

Mysteries of the North Pole. By Robert de la Croix. John Day, 1956. \$3.50. (12 and up).

Dramatic stories of arctic exploration that ended in disaster are related in stirring detail which should appeal particularly to boys. These true accounts are of four ill-fated expeditions beginning with Sir John Franklin's voyage in 1845 to discover a Northwest passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The later undertakings included Salmon Andree's attempt to survey the Pole from a balloon, the ice-blockading of the Russian ship, Saint Anne, and the dirigible journey of Captain Nobile which cost the life of Ronald Amundsen who went to his rescue. The book includes maps and diagrams of routes and an impressive

bibliography. It was translated from the French by Edward Fitzgerald. C

Seven Days From Sunday. By Tom Galt. Illustrated by Don Freeman. Crowell, 1956. \$3.00. (11-up).

From religion, astronomy, astrology and the intermingling of peoples came the origin of time division into weeks, and the naming or numbering of the days of the week. Tom Galt gives an absorbing account of the historic



Seven Days from Sunday

process through which our familiar week day names came into being. There is a separate chapter for each day, which introduces some of the ancient myths about the gods for whom the days were named. An unusual feature is a table of names for each day as it was known in the ancient as well as the modern languages. The book has a fine detailed index and is attractively illustrated with black-and-white drawings. C

A Day With Poli; a Hopi Indian Girl. By Harry C. James. Illustrated by Don Perceval. Melmont, 1957. \$2.00. (7-8).

A Day with Honau, a Hopi Indian Boy. By Harry C. James. Illustrated by Don Perceval. Melmont, 1957. \$2.00. (7-8).

Two little easy-to-read volumes on the Hopi Indians, which used separately or together, give a picture of family life. In *A Day With Poli* is the story of how mother and daughter pass their day sharing the household

tasks, grinding the corn, and preparing the piki bread. In *A Day with Honau* the boy accompanies his father to the corn fields, and captures a rabbit too, which assures them of a fine dinner. Illustrated in bright yellow and black, the books offer good introductory background for primary readers. Both the author and artist, long interested in the Indians, have been adopted by Hopi tribes. C

Four Ways of Being Human: An Introduction to Anthropology. By Gene Lisitzky. Illustrated by C. B. Falls. Viking, 1956. \$4.50. (12 and up).

Written for readers of about junior and senior high age, this excellent introduction to anthropology will offer considerable inspiration to the elementary teacher in the study of other lands and peoples. Four primitive tribes introduced are the Negritos of Malaya,

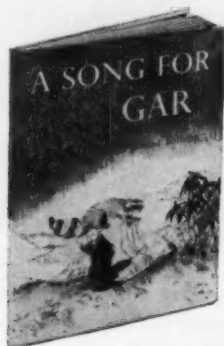


Four Ways of Being Human

the Polar Eskimos, the Maoris and the Hopis. The author describes how each group has adapted to its own particular environment whether it be icecap, jungle or desert region, and built up its own culture. Life within the family and the tribe, dress and ornamentation, ways of securing food, social customs and spiritual beliefs are all the outgrowth of this adaptation. The book is both thought provoking and stimulating and children, familiar only with the highly specialized division of labor in this industrial age, should gain new insight and respect for man's ability to build a successful way of life in a more primitive society. C

A Song for Gar. By Jean Merrill. Illustrated by Ronni Solbert. Whittlesey, 1957. \$2.25. (4-6).

This delightful story almost sings itself to a happy conclusion. Up on Sour Cherry Ridge lived Absalom Marvell and his five bigger brothers and his Ma and Pa. They were all beautiful singers except for Absalom. His thin scratchy little voice was so poor that he



sang only to his pet raccoon Barbary Allen. To her he confided his worries about his older brother Gar who wanted desperately to marry Camden Pride but had no money to fix up a cabin. There was to be a Song Swapping Contest prize of a hundred dollars, but poor Gar could not find the right song to sing and he felt he had no chance of winning. Absalom made up a little song about it to his pet raccoon and Gar overheard him. At the contest he sang the song and won both the prize and the girl.

Excerpts from many songs are quoted through the story, and Absalom's original song has the musical score for the right hand of the tune "Polly Wolly, Doodle." The book jacket quotes a comment of Jesse Stuart. "I thing this is a very good book for children. It has the feeling and flavor of hill music and dancing feet." And there is a freshness and high good humor in this generously illustrated story that should win many friends for it.

C

Mapping the World. Written and illustrated by Erwin Raisz. Abelard Schuman, 1956. \$3.00. (12 and up).

Man's incredible strides in map making from sketches in sand to the highly scientific map making of today are described by an adult author on cartography in his first book for younger readers. Various periods in history will come alive for children as they discover how little was known of the world as early map readers attempted to chart it. The great men of cartography and their achievements are introduced beginning with Claudius Ptolemy of ancient Egypt. The book contains



numerous maps showing man's conception of the world in different historical periods until today. A final chart illustrates strikingly how little of even today's world has been accurately mapped, and the large surface areas still to be reached by cartographers of the future.

C

World Book of Great Inventions. By Jerome S. Meyer. Illustrated. World Publishing Co. 1956. \$3.95. (11 and up).

One of the most comprehensive books on inventions that has been made available for younger readers uses a historical approach in its presentation of material. From the discoveries of primitive man, early civilizations and medieval times it progresses through the developments of the mechanical age; the internal combustion engine, the electrical era, and future potentialities. The illustrations are

of great value and include many unusual drawings such as the inventions of Hero in Pre-Christian time, and intricate designs from the Middle Ages as well as those of more familiar or current invention. Taken-for-granted items such as safety pins and zippers are included. Fine drawings and half-tones have been assembled from a wide variety of sources which include industries, publishers and museums.

C

Pioneers. By Mabel Harmer. Illustrated by Loran Wilford. Children's Press. 1957. \$2.00. (7-9).

With the increasing study of pioneers in the primary grades, this attractive title in the *True Book Series* will be a welcome addition. Starting with Daniel Boone's encouragement of the pioneer homemakers, it gives a good introductory picture of ways of travel, home building and furnishing, food and clothing. Material is brief and concentrated and provides much useful information. Print is large and there are many illustrations in color and black-and-white.

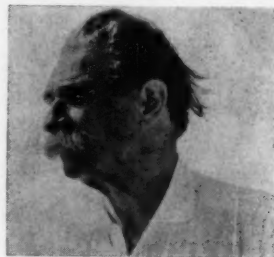
C

Biography

All Men Are Brothers: A Portrait of Albert Schweitzer. By Charlie May Simon. Illus-

trated with photographs by Erica Anderson. Dutton, 1956. \$3.00. (12 and up).

There have been three biographies of Doctor Albert Schweitzer within the last year or two, written by Jo Manton, Jacquelyn Berrill and Charlie May Simon. All three are fine accounts but this particular one suggests greater possible use with the upper elementary reader. The author visited Dr. Schweitzer both in



All Men Are Brothers

his Alsatian home and at Lambarene, and this personal contact has inspired a warm and sympathetic quality in her story of his life from a frail early childhood to his later years dedicated to the service of others. There are fine photographs throughout the book by Erica Anderson, the author of *The World of Albert Schweitzer: a book of photographs*.

C

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